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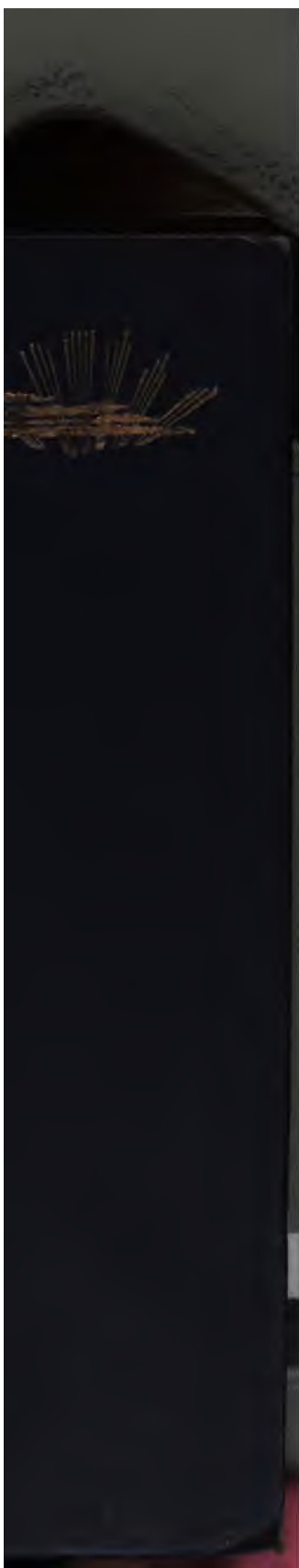
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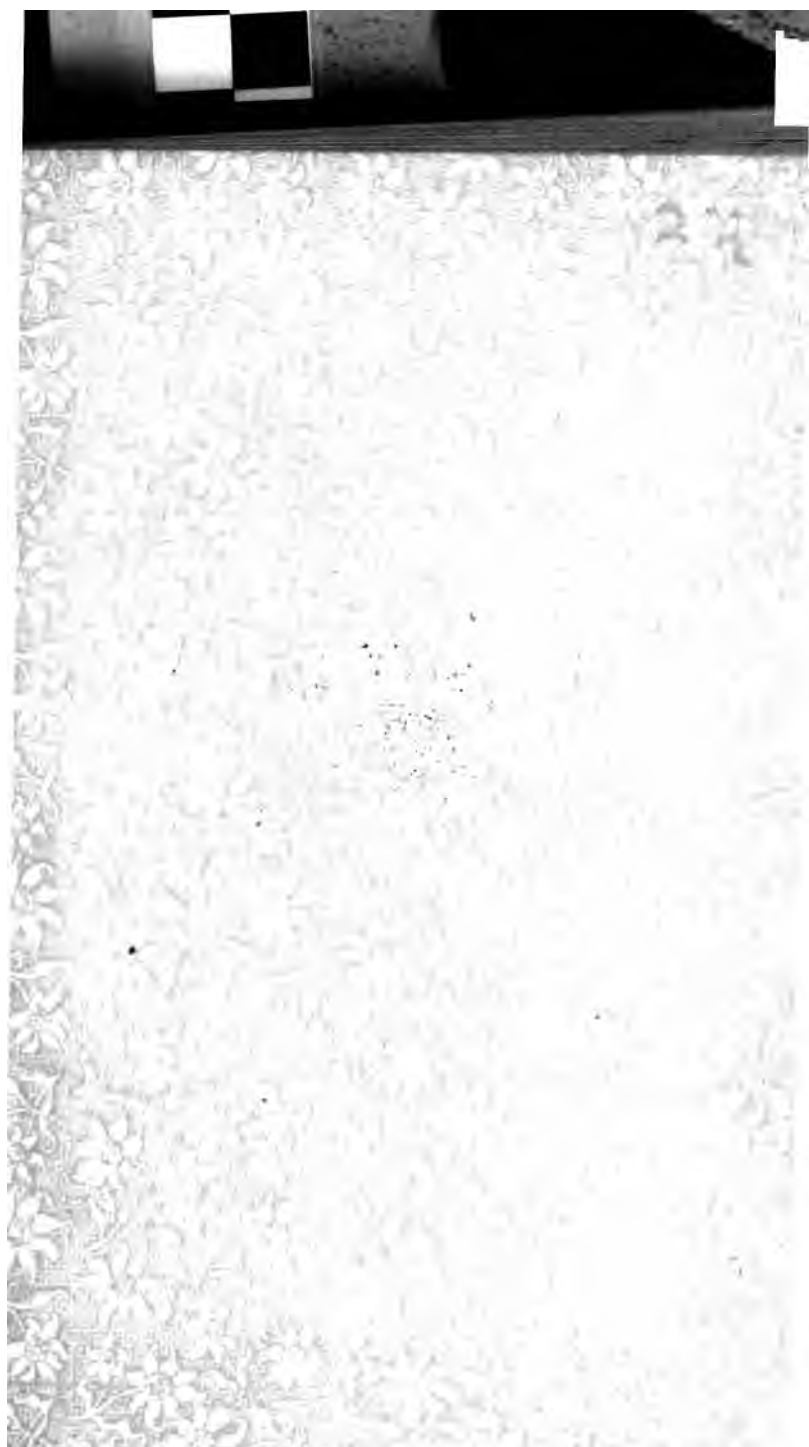
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Dorothy Goodchild

with M. Sprague

West-minster



25

1450



SUMMIT OF THE GOLDEN PAGODA, RANGOON, p. 16.

*Frontispiece.*

in the Land of the  
Rising Sun  
Or, Four Years in Burma

BY  
SISTER KATHARINE

PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE


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REMARKS ON THE NORTH SIDE

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# Towards the Land of the Rising Sun

Or, Four Years in Burma

BY  
SISTER KATHERINE  
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PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE TRACT COMMITTEE

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# TOWARDS THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

## CHAPTER I

### A STRANGER IN THE GOLDEN LAND

**T**ELL them that as long as the Sun shines in the Heavens, the British Flag shall wave over these Possessions."

The words were spoken calmly and firmly by Lord Dalhousie in the presence of the Burmese Envoys who had been sent to Calcutta from the proud and treacherous Court of Ava in December 1854.

They demanded, in the name of their King, the Golden Foot, the restitution of all British possessions in Burma, and Lord Dalhousie's answer was the "ultimatum" to their presumptuous request.

And this land, over which the British Flag proudly waved, was to be my home for several years. As the *Nowshera* steamed up the Rangoon river, one day early in February 1894, I gazed at the surrounding country with the deepest interest.

To the right and left, as far as the eye could reach, stretched the flat country rich in mangroves, palmyras, and other well-grown trees. As we approached Rangoon the centre of attraction became the great dome of the Shwé Dagon Pagoda, which glittered in the fierce rays of the sun.

There is no doubt that a great future lies before this country; in fact it has been said of Rangoon that it "is one of the most rising places in the East."

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This state of prosperity in Burma must be solely attributed to the firm policy of our Government. In years gone by disquietude and mistrust reigned supreme. At last, after enduring many hardships, the British merchants laid before those in authority the grievous oppression to which they were subjected.

For a time there appeared some hope that reparation would be offered by the Court of Ava for the abuses complained of, but a peaceful termination of the negotiations was frustrated by the King, who had only outwardly assumed a friendly attitude. It is true that the Governor at Rangoon was dismissed and a new Viceroy appointed, but by various means the King was strengthening his position and collecting forces. The Viceroy had come down the river accompanied by over twenty war-boats and a large number of armed men—probably three or four thousand. He occupied a magnificent State barge of oriental splendour, and was received at Rangoon with a magnificent display of loyalty on the part of the Burmans.

It was evident that peace was not intended, for when he landed he ignored Commodore Lambert and insulted a deputation of English officers. The crisis had now arrived, and all desiring British protection were ordered to leave the city in two hours.

The Commodore offered to recommence negotiations with the Viceroy if he would offer an apology in person to the officers who had been insulted. These peaceful measures having failed, a decisive step was taken by the Commodore, who ordered a ship belonging to the King of Burma, called *Yá-thé-yai-moon*—"The most precious jewel of the Ocean"—to be seized. This was done to the great indignation of the Burmese officials.

The Commodore now received a message from the Viceroy saying that if the King's ship were taken down the river the British frigate would be fired upon. To this the Commodore replied that he much regretted such a message had been sent, for if a shot *were fired he would open upon the enemy with his guns.*

Of course the Burmans little understood the position they had assumed, and the power of our gunboats.

Down to the stockades, on the eastern and western banks of the river about ten miles from Rangoon, came our ships, including *The most precious jewel of the Ocean*.

The Burmans, who had assembled on the banks in large numbers, were ready to attack us, and alas! fired as they had threatened to do upon the *Hermes*, which had in tow the King's vessel. Then, and not till then, we opened fire. Not a single Englishman was killed or wounded; but at the end of that engagement three hundred Burmans had been destroyed.

When it was too late the Viceroy offered to make peace on any terms, but the matter was no longer in the hands of the Commodore; our future policy rested with the Supreme Government of India.

A few months later the reign of terror ceased. Three millions of people were at last free from the oppressive Government of the King of Ava, and security for British subjects was assured.

On that quiet Sunday afternoon of my arrival, no royal gilt barges were visible; they belong to the past history of Burma, and in their places many an outward bound ship, laden with rich cargoes of rice and far-famed teak-wood, rode at anchor.

We hoped to land early, but the tide was in no hurry to gratify our expectations. At last, when patience was nearly exhausted, the *Nowshera* came to her moorings, and our friends hastened on board to welcome us.

"How late you are!" exclaimed the Chaplain; "the guns went off at two o'clock, and it is six now! Of course it is all the better for landing, because the sun has gone down; but I shall have to drive you quickly to Bishop's Court, for I have to preach this evening at the Pro-Cathedral, and ought to be there in less than half-an-hour."

I had not much luggage, but still what I had looked too much for the little carriage and the small



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Burmese pony. I have often wondered since how we managed to arrive safely at our destination, and how it was that the pony and the carriage did not part company long before the end of that drive. We simply *rushed* down the roads, at the imminent risk of killing somebody or something. But when I became more accustomed to the ways of Burmese ponies, I ceased to be astonished at most things that they did.

My recollection of that drive is a strange blending of wide-spreading green trees—green in spite of the fact that no rain had fallen for three months—which formed natural archways, and groups of gaily-attired natives.

The prevailing colour worn by the Burmese population was a soft pink ; but there were many phongyees (Buddhist monks) to be seen in flowing yellow robes, which formed a marked contrast.

We passed a number of Chinamen in their broad-brimmed straw hats, short black trousers and jackets to match—an intensely ugly costume with no redeeming point. Then there came in view a crowd of Tamils from Southern India, in their graceful, bright-coloured clothes, talking at the top of their voices, and gesticulating with vehemence. Presently we saw richly-attired Mahometans, who passed with a contemptuous glance the more gentle and subtle Hindoo. Shans from Upper Burma, who are supposed to be the parent-stock of both Assamese and Siamese, in their curious attire of dark blue, sometimes came within sight. And Buddhist nuns, usually old women, with shaven heads and white robes, were not wanting in that motley crowd.

Leaving the Cantonment Church on the right, and a large tank on the left, we entered the drive which led to the Bishop's Court, a most picturesque building. How cool the broad verandah looked with its choice orchids, luxurious maidenhair ferns, and crotons of every shade.

On the verandah the servants had assembled to welcome me in the absence of the Lord Padre.

"I am so sorry to leave you in such a hurry,"

said the Chaplain ; " the servants have been told to take care of you, and the Bishop and Mrs. Strachan will soon return from church. They have gone to St. Philip's ; the Bishop preaches there this evening. Good-bye, Sister, and I wish you success in any work you may undertake in this country."

I was not sorry to have time to realize my new surroundings, so different to anything I had ever seen before.

Beyond the beautiful tropical garden there rose, not far off, a small pagoda with its graceful peak aglow with the radiance of the setting sun.

Later on I used to watch the yellow-robed monks, going there to meditate upon the virtues of Gautama. But while I was admiring the scenes before me the servants had noiselessly disposed of my baggage, and I heard Ayah at my side asking if I would take some tea. She was a handsome Hindoo, resplendent in a gracefully-draped cloth, with much jewellery on her arms and round her neck. Besides Ayah there were several men-servants. David, or King David as we liked to call him, was a tall, fine Madrasee, in a spotless white cloth and turban ; the latter was probably twelve yards long, with a band of gold which added much to the magnificence of his appearance. David was a Christian, but Paul, the under ' Boy,' was still a heathen, a clever thoughtful servant who invariably accompanied the Bishop on his extensive tours.

Last of all there was the Burmese dusting ' Boy' ; so called because his duties were confined to dusting the handsomely carved furniture which needed much care during the hot weather, and also during the rains. Very different in appearance was this Burmese to the other servants. He wore a pink silk handkerchief loosely round the head, a white muslin jacket with large open sleeves, and a pink " lungi " falling down to the ankles, but not in graceful folds like the cloths worn by the natives of India.

I discovered before long that it was unusual to employ Burmese servants. Up to the present time the

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Burmese men and women have developed little or no desire to be trained for domestic work. Servants from India have therefore been imported, and are in such great demand that they can obtain double the wages given in Madras.

Rangoon is a very expensive place to live in. During my four years' residence the complaints which reached me upon the subject were endless. House-rent is also very heavy, double again that paid in India.

Ayah led the way up the broad staircase to a suite of rooms set apart for visitors. The venetian windows were all thrown wide open to let in the cooler evening air, but the walls were still hot from the rays of the mid-day sun. Ayah brought me a dainty tray of tea and fruit, and then left me with many "salaams."

Darkness had suddenly fallen on all around, and the soft light of the lamp, which had been placed in the little writing-room, was needed before I could begin my letter to the Sisters in England telling them of my safe arrival.

Not a disturbing sound was heard, but as I wrote on, anxious to finish my epistle before the Bishop's return, I became conscious of some sweet-sounding bells not far distant. I left my writing and peered into the darkness. There in the distance I could see the outline of the pagoda which had attracted my attention earlier in the evening, and I was not long in deciding that the sound of the bells came from that direction.

I was wondering how soon I should grow accustomed to the attractions of this strange and fascinating land, when the noise of carriage-wheels coming up the drive roused me from my reverie. Ayah had entered the room, and was telling me that the Lord Padre and Mrs. Strachan had returned and would like to see me.

I frankly acknowledge that I felt extremely nervous at the prospect of this our first interview. My acquaintance with the Bishop up to that time *had been limited* to a few letters. No Anglican

Sister had ever visited Burma before. In 1890 I had been first asked if I would volunteer for work in this far-distant country, but at that time, although I had willingly consented to start on the long voyage, the climate was considered too unhealthy, and the undertaking was postponed.

And here I must mention, before proceeding further, that from this my first day in Burma, until I sailed for England in March 1898, I received the greatest kindness and consideration from the Bishop. And when difficulties arose, as they naturally did from time to time, I turned instinctively to him for guidance and direction. He had himself a large share of anxious and responsible work, for his Diocese extends from Bhamo, on the Irrawady river, to Tavoy and Mergui in the south, to which must be added the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

I shall never forget the warm welcome which I received that evening at Bishop's Court. I was impressed at once by the Bishop's warm and genuine manner. During my three weeks' visit I learnt more and more to appreciate his powerful mind, and the clear, concise information which he gave me upon many subjects. And Mrs. Strachan? She was the true personification of a Bishop's wife, and possessed a large, kind, sympathetic heart with much intellectual capacity.

A more hospitable house could not be imagined. Visitors were constantly coming and going. Some arrived from Upper Burma, on their way to England; others stayed for a few nights before proceeding to some distant, lonely station. All received a hearty welcome, and left, I feel sure, cheered and refreshed by the kindness showered upon them.

"Really people seem to write to me upon every possible subject," remarked the Bishop one morning after looking through his letters. "Here is a young officer at Mandalay, who stayed with us a short time ago, asking me to buy him a good dog! During the war of *Annexation* we wanted to cheer the officers in

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Upper Burma, and to let them feel that they were not forgotten ; so Mrs. Strachan made a number of Christmas puddings, and despatched them with messages of good-will. In due time letters of thanks reached us, and one officer wrote :—‘ I was far too impatient to wait until dinner-time, so at breakfast I ordered my men to fire a “salute” in honour of the arrival of your welcome present, and then the Christmas fare quickly disappeared ! ’ ”

During the next few days Mrs. Strachan was most kind in taking me to see people who might possibly be of assistance to us later on. I have very distinct recollections of those visits. Two facts always seemed to be forcing themselves upon our attention. The houses were prettily furnished with all manner of oriental curiosities, including a variety of Burmese silver bowls, etc., and my kinsfolk complained of thieves paying them mid-night visits by crawling noiselessly up the *open* verandah staircase ; *doors* being almost unknown in Rangoon.

The second fact was that everybody had recently experienced a carriage accident. One gentleman appeared with his head bandaged up, looking like a French *chef de cuisine* ; whilst his wife greeted us with her arm in a sling. Their pony had unexpectedly seen a shadow across the road, and had promptly attempted to take them and their carriage over a closed gate.

But besides these visits the Chaplain most kindly took me to see the new Cathedral which was then in course of erection. It occupies a most valuable site in Pagoda Road, opposite the General Hospital. The Rangoon College for Burmese students stands in an equally favourable position to the right. The Cathedral is built of red brick, the Hospital and College chiefly, but not entirely, of teak-wood.

Attached to the College there is a valuable library, where we spent many hours studying the works of *reference*.

There can be no doubt in any thoughtful mind that Rangoon has made most marked progress in the direction of civilization and education since the town first came into the hands of the English in 1824. Then our troops practically took possession of a swamp, with a few miserable wooden houses on piles, and native bamboo huts. Not a single life was lost on that memorable day in May when Sir Archibald Campbell landed his soldiers, and in less than half-an-hour the British flag was hoisted.

But this was not a desirable or satisfactory position to occupy, for only empty houses had come into our possession. The Burmans hid themselves in the dense jungles and refused to supply, at any price, the much-needed provisions for our troops. The monsoon was also daily expected to break, and the rains would continue with little intermission for six long months. And besides those difficulties, it was well known that his Golden-Footed Majesty was making great preparations "to cover the face of the earth with an innumerable host, and to drive back the wild foreigners into the sea from whence they came."

It is possible now to smile at such audacity.

## CHAPTER II

### THE GOLDEN PAGODA

**T**HE Bishop was arranging for his departure for England; he would be absent for at least a year, so that I could not look forward much longer to receiving his kind and wise advice.

From day to day I gathered as much information as possible, and believed that as I had been guided to Burma, so also the future would surely be made plain.

"Would you like to see our girls' school in the Cathedral Compound?" asked the Bishop soon after my arrival. "We will gladly let you have the 'office'

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gharri, as it is called, but I am afraid you will find it a terribly noisy conveyance."

I was extremely glad to carry out the suggestion, and found myself, an hour later, at the school, where I saw for the first time Grace Darling. This high-minded, clever English woman at once made a favourable impression upon me.

"I have heard all about you from the Bishop," she exclaimed warmly, as she led the way to the upper verandah which formed a very hot little sitting-room, looking towards the Cathedral. "I am so thankful you have come, for I am going home soon, and have been longing for somebody to carry on the work when I leave."

"I am sure you have found the school most interesting," I remarked.

"Yes, indeed! And I have grown to love the children under my care, and you will do the same; they have so many good qualities, and are naturally clever; in fact in mathematics they are much in advance of English children."

"Do the resident pupils come from a distance?" I asked.

"Oh! yes, their homes are many miles away. The long journeys in country carts are very trying for young children. They nearly all spend the hot-weather holidays with their parents. Many of our girls have clever Burmese mothers."

"Is it true," I inquired, "that women in Burma occupy quite a different position to women in India?"

"Indeed they do," replied Grace Darling warmly; "the women of this country are very independent, and help their husbands in many ways. They buy and sell in the bazaars; acquire land, and build houses. There is no 'caste' question amongst the people of Burma; money rules and directs position."

"I am so surprised to find such advanced education in Rangoon because the town has but recently come under our rule," I remarked.

"Much has been done in that direction in a short time. The Director of Public Instruction takes the

deepest interest in the welfare of the country. And now that peace has been maintained for several years the onward progress has been most encouraging."

"This does not look like a large building," I ventured to say, for it was evident that Grace Darling enjoyed giving any details about her work ; "how do you manage to make room for all the children ?"

"We are overcrowded, and it is impossible in such limited space to attempt good discipline. The house would be admirable for the resident pupils, but there is absolutely no space for day scholars. Archdeacon Blythe—now Bishop in Jerusalem—was the energetic originator of the school. Before it was built the girls were educated in the adjoining boys' school, an arrangement which had many and serious drawbacks. Yes, we want more space very badly."

I looked up and saw that tears were in her eyes, and yet she was such a brave woman.

"You have done a good work," I said, "and you will be greatly missed when you do leave."

"I should like to see you settled in Rangoon before I sail for England," she said earnestly.

She was very weary and over-strained, I could see that at a glance ; and rest was coming sooner, and in a more tragic way than either she or I could have dreamt of.

"You will be glad," she continued, "when the Cathedral is finished. It will be a very handsome building. Now we have to walk or drive to the Pro-Cathedral, which is very inconvenient owing to the distance."

That was by no means the last conversation I had with Grace Darling, and every time I saw her I admired her character more. By degrees I discovered what a deeply religious, earnest-minded woman she was—one who could not fail to spread an influence for good around her.

Together in the cool of the evening we went several times to look at houses which might be suitable for the Sisters.

One building in particular we longed to secure for



## 16 TOWARDS THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN

our future work. It stood in a very central position surrounded by a fairly large compound. The large entrance-hall was particularly attractive; and a handsome staircase led to the upper floor, where we found a spacious centre room, with numerous smaller apartments leading off to the right and left. The modest purchase price was about Rs.35,000. We sighed when we heard this, and agreed the amount was rather beyond us.

"After all there are drawbacks," said Grace Darling, to console me. "I have never seen such extraordinary baths; there are simply two small tanks built into the wall on the ground floor, which evidently represent the bathing accommodation of the house. I think they must have been made for Chinamen."

But in spite of the tanks, and their connection with the Celestials, I never passed that building without regret. We should have been saved several years of anxiety if the property could have been secured at that time. Ultimately it passed into the hands of a rich Burman, who lived in India. His eldest son went to England to eat his dinners at the Temple. The food, I was told, disagreed with his digestive powers, but he came back to the East a member of the Primrose League, which, of course, ranks much higher than a Barrister-at-law of the Inner Temple!

"Will you come to-morrow morning with us to the Shwé Dagon Pagoda?" asked the Mission Priest from Kemmendine; "there is so much to be seen that we must start early."

I accepted the invitation gladly, for Mr. Rickard would be able to explain the religion of the Buddhists, having lived amongst them for many years. It should never be forgotten that the missionaries in Burma have been the pioneers of civilization. They have lived lives of self-sacrifice far from home and friends, under a tropical sun, simply in obedience to those words which have echoed through many ages, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations."

Certain it is that during our Burmese wars the

missionaries were frequently used by our Government to further the cause of peace and justice. And they are living now, as their predecessors did before them, devoted lives amongst the different tribes in the jungle, or in the larger centres of civilization.

May they have grace and courage to persevere in their high calling!

In the early morning Mr. and Mrs. Rickard called for me at Bishop's Court, and we soon found ourselves upon the steps leading up to the Shwé Dagon Pagoda. This was my first visit, and I contemplated with the deepest interest the entrance to Buddha's magnificent shrine. The approach is rendered imposing by two enormous griffins which stand out white and clear against the sky; creatures which on a moonlight night have almost a terrifying appearance.

That early morning no great Burmese festival was going on, but a crowd of Buddhists were ascending the steps, taking with them their offerings of flowers and candles for the shrines, which were yet invisible, on the upper platform.

An archway of imposing proportions rose over the polished steps which we were about to ascend; and above the archway was seen a peak of exquisite carving, with a background of palm-trees.

Only a few English soldiers were to be seen, for a time of peace had come to Burma. But the Pagoda had been, in past years, the scene of a desperate struggle between a civilized Western nation and a courageous, heroic, but unskilled Eastern people. Maha Bandoola, a remarkable chieftain, appeared at the head of his 50,000 men in December 1824, and was defeated by our British soldiers and loyal sepoys.

But again in 1852 the Shwé Dagon Pagoda was a silent witness of a great conflict. Lieutenant Doran was amongst those who fell that day—he lay near the entrance dying the death of a brave soldier. Our troops, after a desperate resistance on the part of the enemy, gained the upper platform of the Pagoda, and its magnificent site, overlooking the Irrawady river, fell into our hands for the second time.

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Laughing, talking, and jesting, the early devotees of Buddha ascended the well-polished steps—polished by the feet of those who had passed up and down during hundreds of years.

On either side the way was lined with small stalls, upon which were displayed for sale, candles, flowers, and other offerings for the shrines.

Now we passed a group of happy, cheerful, independent women, smoking their enormous cigars, with little brown-skinned children clinging to their mothers' gay silk attire.

The men, too, dressed like the women, with the exception of the "gaung baung," seemed bent on enjoying to the full this early morning visit to the Pagoda. The wives whom they have left at home, or who may have accompanied them, are industrious, clever women, and will help them through any financial difficulty.

Did not one of them quite recently buy a plot of land in Pagoda Road, and transform it from a swamp—which it certainly was during the rainy season—into a valuable and healthy site? And was it not Ma Soh who made such a bargain in Mandalay Bazaar, and brought down the goods to Rangoon where she disposed of them at a considerable profit? And Ma Htoon, too, was getting quite rich by making cigars, and selling them herself. There was no need for her husband to be very active; he might even spend a day in his little bamboo hut; talk to his friends and enjoy a good smoke without any fear of being scolded in the evening. True it was that they had several children, but the little ones did not need many nor expensive meals, only curry and rice twice a day. And clothes? Oh, they did not cost much either. Was not the sun hot in the dry season? And in the rains a little oil was better than many garments.

Up the steps we went with the noisy, chattering, good-natured crowd. But when we reached the upper platform an air of solemnity seemed suddenly to fall on all around, and we found ourselves in the midst of

phongyees and devotees, deep in meditation upon the virtues of Gautama.

As I looked up into the blue, cloudless sky, and saw the golden peak (Shwé means golden) rising far above us, I longed that on the summit might be planted the symbol of Christianity.

Gongs and bells innumerable were sounding in the air, from the peaks and pinnacles round the base of the Pagoda.

"Will these people resent our presence?" I asked Mr. Rickard, looking round at the crowd.

"Oh! no, they do not mind English visitors, there is nothing to fear," was the reassuring reply. "See, shall we stand under the shadow of this shrine and watch undisturbed what is going on? Look at those Buddhists who are bending low before that image of Gautama, with the benign eyes; now they are rising and presenting their offerings of candles and flowers."

"Surely Buddha was like the old philosophers, a 'seeker after God'—one who longed to know the truth. And the religion of these people—what is it? Do they believe in a future existence, or do they live only for the present happiness?" I asked.

"The way of salvation," explained Mr. Rickard, "was to Buddha the way to Nirvana, the final blessed extinction. After many years of disappointment and fruitless teaching, he found this way and henceforth taught it to others. The hope of eternal life does not cheer a Buddhist—he has no such glorious anticipation. Total annihilation is the goal on which his eye is fixed. For him, as a Buddhist, there is no doctrine of the forgiveness of sins through an atonement."

"But who was Buddha, and what are his claims to thus reigning supreme, as it were, over the hearts of thousands here and elsewhere in the East?"

"Buddha is not the name of any particular divinity," was Mr. Rickard's reply; "it is said that there have been four Buddhas or 'Enlightened Ones.' The last was Gautama; one more, Arumaday, has still to come into existence. Gautama was born B.C. 626. He

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gave up all the attractions of the world at the age of thirty-five, and became a Buddha ; and continued in that state of sanctity for forty-five years, and then having obtained much merit by holy deeds entered, it is said, Nirvana. The laws and sayings of Gautama were collected, having been previously transmitted orally, and written in Pali, about A.D. 94 in Ceylon. The whole collection is known by the name of Betagat, and beyond this the Burmans have no other sacred volumes."

Talking thus we spent a long time wandering amongst the different shrines, enriched with beautiful carving ; and every now and then we were startled by the deep booming sound of the great bell, which echoed and re-echoed through the clear morning air.

As the heat increased we descended the many steps which led to the entrance, where the monstrous griffins looked indeed powerful guardians of the Great Golden Pagoda.

As we drove away from that intensely interesting sight some words of Charles Kingsley's, which I had recently read, occurred to my mind :—

"Never was the young abbot heard to speak harshly of any human being. 'When thou hast tried in vain for seven years,' he used to say, 'to convert a sinner, then only wilt thou have a right to suspect him of being a worse man than thyself.' Above all, Abbot Philamon stopped by stern rebuke any attempt to revile either heretics or heathens. 'On the Catholic Church alone,' he said, 'lies the blame of all heresy and unbelief ; for if she were but one day that which she ought to be, the world would be converted before nightfall.'"

## CHAPTER III

## A BRAVE DEED

"**W**E sail for home in a fortnight; until then you must come and stay with us at Kokine; at the end of that time you will be able to join Miss Darling in the Cathedral Compound." It was the wife of the Judicial Commissioner for Lower Burma who gave the kind invitation, which I was extremely glad to accept, for the Bishop had already gone to England.

Kokine is about three miles from Rangoon, and several degrees cooler than the town during the hot season. The house stood in a large open space, and was quite luxuriant in the way of mosquitoes, which drove me from any position I might take up in less than a quarter of an hour!

In the early morning I used to take my books into the jungle adjoining the house, and enjoy for a time the breeze which soon died away.

The April heat was intense, but little Cyril, Harold, and Sylvia scampered about as if they had been in Nova Scotia or any other cold climate; their spirits never seemed to suffer from tropical depression. They, and the six older children who were at that time in England, are fatherless now, and Burma has lost one of her best Judges.

Before sailing, these kind friends lent me for a time their pretty white pony and open carriage; and it was also arranged that Hetty, one of their nurses, who was going to be married in a few weeks, should remain with me until Miss Darling's return from Amherst.

One day the Judge was more than usually silent, and I expressed a hope to his wife that he was not ill.

"Oh! no, he is quite well, but just now he has a very difficult case to decide, and I know it troubles him a good deal. Two Burmese women are accused of robbing a little child of its jewellery, and then throwing it into a well. It is no easy matter in the

... became burdensome.

The day on which the Judge and his family from England took up my residence with the building adjoining the Cathedral, and in a few days to see Grace Darling and her expectations were not to be fulfilled.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Miss Darling and Lucy drowned till their bodies recovered."

That was the telegram which was handed to me one evening late in April. The man who handed it to me looked stunned with the news.

"What shall I do, Sister?"

"Who else knows the terrible news? I must tell it for you. How dreadful for your poor wife!"

"Nobody else has seen the telegram; I saw it five minutes ago."

"Take it to the Chaplain; he will be able to advise you—there is no time to lose; the ship will be to-morrow."

"How I long to get to Amherst! But the ship is not a steamer for several days. The poor wife is lost without anybody to take care of her. I can't do it all here."

The figure disappeared in the darkness; it was one of the darkest nights I have ever known in Burma, in more sense than one.

In the early part of the day I had received a message from Grace Darling herself telling me to expect her in a few days. And *this* was the termination of all our plans.

Amherst is a quiet hot-weather resort, much frequented by those who cannot spare sufficient time nor money to get across to one of the Hill Stations in India. The chief amusement is bathing, the coast being, as Grace's brother-in-law had remarked, fairly safe. And down to the beach that fatal afternoon she had taken her party of girls, who were spending their holidays with her. Amongst these children were five sisters. Lucy, the eldest, was far out in deep water, but not dangerously so, when suddenly a piercing scream was heard. There was not a moment to be lost; Lucy was in danger, and somebody must go to her; the other girls had finished bathing, Lucy had lingered the last. Grace Darling, without a thought of her own safety, rushed into the sea and succeeded in reaching the drowning girl. A large fish had attacked her; she was powerless, and in an agony of pain and fear she clung to her would-be preserver—then they both disappeared.

Once more a brave effort was made, and this time it was Margaret Stone who rushed, almost wild with terror, into the water. She did her best, poor child, and clung to Grace Darling's beautiful hair in her endeavour to keep the now unconscious forms above water. Every moment seemed an hour!

At last the bodies were carried to the upper part of the beach. Margaret had fainted away—Lucy was dead—and Grace breathed *once*, but only once. It was said that if a doctor had been at hand she might possibly have been restored to life.

The next day the simple funeral took place; there was much sympathy shown towards the poor girls, who returned saddened and utterly unnerved to Rangoon by the first available boat.



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Grace Darling was at rest ; all her anxious toil amongst the children of Burma was over now, and in the prime of her womanhood she had *gladly*—I use the word advisedly—laid down her life. From conversations which I had so much enjoyed when we had been together, I had discovered that she had no clinging to this present existence ; life beyond the grave she felt would disclose to her greater joys than any she could expect in this life. She had experienced one great sorrow which in secret she had revealed to me ; but it had brought no bitterness with it, only a greater desire to live, and possibly die, for others. And now, instead of returning to her native country, as she had planned to do, at least for a time, she was laid to rest in a heathen land miles away from home and friends. But to us, who had known and loved her, she would never be forgotten ; and least of all by the children whom, with motherly care, she had gathered around her.

There is now a "Grace Darling " memorial window in the Rangoon Cathedral, which will be a silent witness for ever to the brave deed of one of our own countrywomen.

Margaret Stone was the one who suffered most from the shock, from which she really never recovered. Some time afterwards she developed fever, and from the first I could see little or no hope of her recovery. Very often during her illness I visited her, and was with her when she died. With an intense look of radiant joy she would lift her thin hand, from time to time, and point upwards. There was an expression of spiritualized satisfaction upon her dying face. Were Grace and Lucy visible to her eyes, so soon now to be closed in death ? None may say. But I knelt on by her side in awe and wonder at the nearness of the Angels and the Vision of heavenly things which was opening out before her.

And as for myself, I was now practically alone with many difficulties to face in the near future, in connection with the school.

Grace Darling had been the leading spirit for some

years of that valuable institution where children belonging to the Anglican Church were taught the Faith, and strengthened to meet the temptations of their future lives. In a few days the holidays would be over and the girls would return to Rangoon ; some of them were even then on their way to Lower Burma.

It seemed inevitable that at this early stage, even before we had secured a house suitable for the Sisters, I should find myself responsible for work which I had hoped would not come into our hands for at least several months.

All the sad particulars of Grace Darling's tragic end were sent home, and I was much comforted when, after a long delay of many weeks, I received assurances from the Sisters in England that they were thankful I had been in Rangoon when the accident occurred, and that strength and courage to take up the work had been given me.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BREAKING OF THE MONSOON

“**W**ILL you explain to the Syce to-morrow morning that he must take the pony to its new master ? The carriage is to go into the town to be sold,” I said to Hetty, whom I found industriously sewing upon the verandah by the light of the lamp, for the day had closed in unusually early.

“Syce knows all about the pony, Sister, but I’m afraid when he comes to-morrow he will say that the carriage has been injured. It was all right this afternoon when we returned from the cloth bazaar.”

“Well, if it was in good condition to-day, why do you think it will be injured by to-morrow ?” I asked in a puzzled voice.

“Oh ! you see, Syce knows this is his last opportunity of making a little money perhaps for a few

overwhelmed at the prospect before me.

"Oh! yes, Sister, you will; it is at first so trying; they know that you are from the country, but in time, when you know them, you will grow to like them. He is really not a reliable man. He was near Kokine; we were often afraid that in the end there would be a carriage accident."

"I am so glad, Hetty, that you have seen what may happen; I shall know now what to say to Syce when he appears."

The wind moaned round the house all night. The day had been stormy, but it was now dead and fallen.

"The monsoon will soon break," said Hetty, looking up; "I shall be glad, Sister, for you know the worst part of the wet season is over. I have always been told that this is a very trying time for English people. I wonder if the roof of the house is all right, and if the venetians can be fastened. There is often a good deal of wind during the monsoon."

"There are really no doors to speak of here," said Hetty, looking round. "You see this verandah, and the doors are all open."

night visitor had been seen turning over the things in her almirah ; of course he was looking for money."

"A Burman, I suppose?"

"Oh! yes; they are very clever thieves," said Hetty, to console me.

"Although Miss Darling had no Durwan, the Malee undertook to guard the house at night."

"He does it in a funny way," I said, laughing, "for the other night one of the venetians kept on banging on the ground-floor, and I ventured forth to see what could be done. Half-way down the staircase I found Malee with a stout bamboo by his side—profoundly asleep. I tried to awake him, but as he did not stir I stepped over him, and having found where the noise came from returned to my room, and felt for the first time that it was more than strange that a *curtain* alone should divide me from the outer world."

"I am sure that you could never bear the heat, Sister, if you were to close your venetians," sagely remarked Hetty.

"No; indeed I would rather let in a thief than keep out the air; and besides, I am sure it would be wrong to give way to fears. Life out here would become unbearable."

"I am glad to see that you are brave, Sister. Do you know that many ladies have loaded pistols in their rooms at night? I don't quite see what good can come of this. I remember an English lady getting her husband to buy a pistol soon after her arrival in Burma. Of course the following year she went home for a few months, and when she returned the pistol was nowhere to be found. It is scarcely prudent to supply the people of the country with weapons in that sort of way."

It was growing late, so I told Hetty she should put away her needlework and go to rest, as we had a busy day before us. I did not like to think of the time, which was near at hand, when she would have to leave me. She was engaged to be married to an Englishman who had served his time in the army, and had made up his mind not to return to England.

Eurasians usually find it more than difficult to save any money, but Hetty had been most praiseworthy in this respect, and had a good many hundred rupees safely banked.

Hetty went to her room—I retired behind my curtain—and Malee took up his *responsible* position upon the staircase and slept.

About midnight I awoke with a sense that something was wrong. I listened. No, there was no sound; the storm which had threatened to burst had passed over. Malee, I supposed, was still keeping guard in his own peculiar way; and I argued to myself that it was extremely foolish to be wakeful and nervous. But such arguments did not in the least calm me, and soon finding that sleep was impossible, I rose.

My first thought was to look into Hetty's room and see if she too had been aroused.

As I gently drew aside the curtain a blaze of light flashed across my eyes—the whole room was illumined. Hetty, I could see at a glance, was fast asleep. The lamp she had left on a little table was in a blaze.

"Hetty, Hetty!" I cried, seizing a blanket, "come and help me or the house will be on fire." She rose, poor girl, dazed with the sudden alarm. A few minutes more and we should have been too late; for the building was as dry as it could be after the long hot season.

When we were calm again I returned to my room with a very thankful heart, for we had been saved from a great and terrible disaster. Who had aroused me just at the critical time? Why had I not slept on until all hope of extinguishing the flames must have passed? Surely my Guardian Angel had been by my side to warn me of the danger close at hand.

What Hetty had told me about the Syce came true. The next morning he appeared with a very solemn face and informed me that the shaft was broken, and might he take it to be mended?

"No, certainly *not*—take the carriage to the auctioneers, and I will pay them for any repairs that

may be needed," I said, through Hetty, my interpreter, and Syce was evidently surprised and disappointed at my reply.

That afternoon there was a sudden roar and rush of wind round the house, and the trees which hid the Cathedral from our view bent low as the storm passed—then the thunder became deafening and the lightning appalling.

"It's the breaking of the monsoon," said Hetty calmly, she was more accustomed to tropical storms than I was; "the rain will come soon now. Listen—see—it has commenced already."

With a fearful splash! splash! splash! the Rangoon deluge set in. No rain had fallen since the previous October, and now the thirsty land drank in the welcome moisture. Between the clashes of thunder Hetty and I held what conversation we could, but even then owing to the falling rain we had to considerably raise our voices to make ourselves heard.

Up the verandah staircase came a pitiful object; it was Malee, who had been sent on a message into the town and had been caught in the rain. Very comical, poor fellow, he looked with his straw hat, Japanese umbrella, and soaking garments.

"Shall I tell him to go to his go-down and get dry?" asked Hetty, "or he will be laid up with fever to-morrow, and that will be inconvenient, as we have not many servants."

Of course I gladly assented.

An hour later the upper part of the house presented a very extraordinary appearance. Every available receptacle that could be pressed into service was utilized to catch the falling rain; there were many leakages, and without Hetty's prompt measures we must have been in a very damp, swamp-like state.

"It is generally like this at first," said Hetty, quite cheerfully, "the roof will be in a better condition to-morrow, and possibly quite right the next day. It is rather steamy though, Sister."

And she spoke the truth—we were practically

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living in a vapour-bath, and would do so, more or less, for the next six months—a very happy prospect!

All through the night the storm continued. The crashes of thunder were still terrible, and the flashes of lightning blinding; and without intermission the rain came down as if it never meant to stop. But still the heat increased.

There was not much rest for anybody that night. And the sailors at sea, how were they faring? I hope that many prayers were offered for their safety.

Next morning our 'Boy' (he was only a temporary servant until we could move into a larger house) brought the news that the ships were coming up the river looking like wrecks; that many large trees had been uprooted and were lying across the roads; and that a number of houses had been damaged. It was still raining, but the wind had subsided, and the thunder and lightning had ceased, and we could distinguish each other's voices.

In the afternoon, amongst other visitors, a lady came to see me whose husband was an officer in Cantonments.

"Oh! Sister," she exclaimed, before she had barely reached the verandah, "we had a terrible time yesterday. The cyclone affected our part of Rangoon more than any other. I was resting for a few minutes on a sofa in my room when suddenly the venetians were burst open by the force of the wind; the branches of a large tree were thrust through the open windows, and something black was *hurled* over my head—I fled from the room in terror."

"What *could* it have been?" I asked with interest.

"I nearly fainted when I got to the other side of our bungalow, and then Ayah volunteered to go back to my room and to see what had happened."

"Was it anything very dreadful?"


"Ayah returned with the news that the wind had whirled a mattress from one side of the room to the other! No wonder I was frightened; and before she had finished telling me, the 'Boy' rushed up-stairs saying that our stables had been lifted up and

deposited in the adjoining compound ! The shock was almost too much for me," said the officer's wife, fanning herself.

I tried to look quite serious and sympathetic, but it was rather difficult to listen to such catastrophes without a smile. Perhaps Hetty and I might find ourselves transferred by the next cyclone to the roof of the Cathedral—house and all !

## CHAPTER V

### CHANGES

OON after the breaking of the monsoon I found a telegram waiting for me on my return from the Pro-Cathedral. It contained very different news to the sad message from Amherst. Sister Esther was on her way from Madras, and would be with us on Whitsunday. I knew she could not be spared long from India, but her advice and assistance would be most welcome, if only for a few weeks.

The beautiful Choral Celebration was just ended, and the sevenfold *Amen* had been sung, when I heard the guns go off which announced the arrival of the Madras steamer.

I found the Chaplain's Peon waiting for me outside.

"Top dag-ga Kya ?" he asked.

"Ama, Ama," I replied, and in a few minutes we had reached the landing-stage.

Poor Sister Esther had experienced a very bad passage, a distance of a thousand miles, which should take about four days to accomplish. The Bay of Bengal is certainly to be avoided during the early weeks of the monsoon.

"You have a charming little house," she said, looking round with interest, "it is perfectly different to the houses in India. I think this pretty verandah



is very attractive, and how clever of you to make such a nice Oratory behind that red screen ; but it is hot, and in the dry season I expect you could scarcely use it."

"We had better commence the search for a house to-morrow—don't you think so, Sister ? I am afraid very few will be found suitable for our purpose."

"Oh ! yes, let us begin at once ; the sooner the better. I could not possibly risk my reputation as a disciplinarian in such crowded class-rooms as these must be."

After Evensong we discussed our plans for the following day ; and then we retired to rest. My heart was full of gratitude that once more I had a Sister to share with me the many difficulties connected with the organization of a new centre of work.

Of course the rain descended the next day in torrents. It seems almost superfluous here to make such a remark, because during the whole of Sister Esther's visit we had not one fine day.

Soon after breakfast Malee brought us a ticca gharri—it was a small carriage made of teak-wood, and varnished brown ; the roof was raised a few inches from the sides to allow a free current of air. Perched up high on the box was the gharri-wallah—his brown legs fully visible ; and on his head, to keep off the rain, a hat similar to that worn by Malee on a previous occasion. The harness looked, to say the least, unsafe ; there were ominous odds and ends of string to be seen. The Burmese pony had evidently been well fed, and was far too excitable for the welfare of the harness.

"Shall we be safe ?" I ventured to ask 'Boy' ; he looked doubtful, but he hoped so. As I was speaking the pony made a dash in the direction of the compound, but was reined in by the gharri-wallah.

"I do not quite like the look of the conveyance," remarked Sister Esther, who was accustomed to drive out in a large coach drawn by two sedate and well-behaved bullocks ; the pony would evidently be trying to her nerves.

'Boy' informed me, seeing our hesitation, that it would take some time to get another gharri; most of the men were going then to their rice. We were just making up our minds to encounter the perils evidently before us, when the pony arranged matters its own way, and made once more a desperate rush towards the road, and this time with success. It was no use for the gharri-wallah to shout and struggle; the pony had made up its mind to depart, and depart it did with a determination which we might have admired upon a different occasion.

Then we sat down on the verandah and wondered how long Malee would take to bring us another conveyance; our patience was certainly tried, for we had to wait for more than half-an-hour. But the second pony was quite different to the first one. It was a very miserable, underfed creature and had no will of its own.

"Dahine phiro," I said, feeling quite proud of my knowledge of Hindoostani. We took a long time to arrive at the place of business in Merchant Street of a much-respected Armenian, who would be able to give us a list of empty houses. The building must be large—in a good central position—and the rent must be *low*—so we said, and we could not help smiling ourselves at the description.

"And what would you call a good central position?" asked the Armenian with much politeness; "Merchant Street is in a good position, but I don't suppose you would care to come into the town, nor your pupils either."

"Oh! no. Have you no house that you can recommend near the new Cathedral? We are so anxious not to be far from there."

But the Armenian shook his head doubtfully.

"Would you mind taking one in Cantonments overlooking the Meidan? the situation is good and fairly central."

"What are the drawbacks?" we asked, noticing some hesitation in the question.

"The houses are meant for the officers and their  
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families, and are taken with the understanding that if they are needed they will be vacated when required."

"That rule raises an insurmountable obstacle," I replied with decision.

"It is absolutely necessary," put in Sister Esther, "that we should find a house at once." She was beginning to picture to herself the return to Madras with nothing accomplished. It seemed rather hard when she had gone through so much to reach Rangoon.

"I suppose you are not prepared to buy any property? I have an excellent building on my books, with a fair amount of land, and the price asked is only Rs.35,000."

"No, I am sorry we are not," I replied, rather ruefully, for the amount recalled to my mind the building which Grace Darling had inspected with me, and this was evidently the same.

At the end of the conversation a list of houses was handed to me; very probably they would all be unsuitable.

One owner was distressed to find that we did not admire his large, dark bungalow, and promptly offered to pull it down and to build a new one for us. We thought that might take a little *time*, so we did not fall in very readily with his suggestion; but we thought it was a very magnificent one and worthy of our gratitude.

At the end of a fruitless search we returned home, not only damp, but soaked through with the pitiless downpour, which had never ceased. The ticca gharri too was soaking, the poor gharri-wallah was the same, and the pony was too depressed to give any trouble.

For a whole week those excursions continued, and each day ended with the same result. Our large house—in a central position—at a low rent was evidently *not* forthcoming.

And what were we to do? I suggested hiring a boat on the river, or going into tents; but neither idea seemed to meet with much approval.

"Well, the central position must evidently be relinquished and the low rent too," I said.

One morning we were seized by a desire to drive off in quite a different direction to any we had gone before, in fact towards Kemmendine and the jungle beyond.

"It does not sound much like a prosperous school," remarked Sister Esther, "but before we get to the jungle we may find *something*."

And we did ; unexpectedly, some distance from the new Cathedral, we came upon some very prettily-built houses. One was to let, so a big placard informed us, and we alighted and went over the building.

"I think this will do," I thankfully remarked ; "the rooms look simply charming with their sea-green and chocolate colouring." Up-stairs there was a large centre room, and beautiful verandah, with four good-sized rooms leading off from it ; and down-stairs there was plenty of space for our present needs. And the rent ? That was no less than Rs.150 a month. But under the circumstances we felt we must be resigned.

"I hope it will not be too far for the children to come," said Sister Esther. "If so we shall lose a good many, but we must risk that."

As we drove back I felt very glad that our long damp expeditions might possibly soon come to an end. On our return we wrote to the owner of Arracan House, and offered to rent the building, and then awaited the reply with anxiety. That evening Sister Esther and I sat in solemn conclave.

"I think we are sure to secure the house, don't you, Sister ?"

"Yes," I replied. "I think so too. The name is attractive ; I wonder why it is called so. Have you realized the fact that we have no school furniture to put into it ? And we have nothing in hand to buy any with. It is rather an awkward position to be placed in."

"You get the money, Sister, and I will undertake to spend it !" That was the arrangement made

between us, which both of us faithfully carried out.

"I wish we could leave this building for a fortnight. We ought to give all our time and thoughts to the new house. Don't you remember one of the agents in the town mentioned to us that there was a little cottage, or something of that sort, to be let not far from here? Would it not be an excellent plan to take it until we can get into Arracan House? What do you think?"

"Splendid! It sounds so quiet and peaceful,—'a cottage amongst palm-trees.'"

So we secured Arracan House and went at once to the 'Cottage,' as we liked to call it, which was partly furnished. There were two tiny rooms on the ground-floor, and two the same size above. We always looked back with great pleasure to that fortnight, which passed only too quickly. The day we left the Cathedral Compound the rain was descending in torrents. A bullock-cart preceded us, with our belongings, but we ourselves arrived at the 'Cottage' in a *ticca gharri*. Sister Esther's chief anxiety was the inkstand which she held in her grasp; wherever we went in Rangoon that inkstand and Sister seemed inseparable; I think it was a sign of her office.

I remembered that there was a great scarcity of chairs, and when the Chaplain arrived to see if we were comfortably settled, only *one* was available for three of us. He expressed many regrets for calling at such an early hour, but remarked evidently for our consolation that he "saw daylight at last." I looked out of the *venetians*, but could only discern a dull horizon beyond the palm-trees, but afterwards discovered that he referred to our financial difficulties.

## CHAPTER VI

## ARRACAN HOUSE

**M**Y husband is very glad to let the house to you ; we shall enjoy having you and your big family next door to us." The speaker was Mrs. Harcourt, the wife of our landlord ; they proved to be very kind, thoughtful people—thoroughly English. Mr. Harcourt had been a rich man, and had a good deal of property in Rangoon besides several houses. But at the time we became his tenants there was some heavy financial difficulty to meet in the near future. He was much and deservedly respected, and no blame was ever attached to him for what had happened ; but the trouble was evidently shortening his life. " I think you will like Arracan House," continued Mrs. Harcourt, " it is very well built ; in fact my husband spent too much money upon it ; it has a framework of iron, which came out from England in the *Arracan*, that is the reason why the house bears that name. If you should want to know anything, just come across the compound in the evening and I will give you any information I can. Don't expect *chits* from me ; I am not able to hold a pen, nor do any letter writing."

" Oh ! I am very sorry," I said with much sympathy ; " have you hurt your hand ? "

" It happened some years ago," she replied with hesitation ; " I will tell you about it another time—I do not often mention the subject to anybody."

The happy days at the ' Cottage ' were nearly at an end, we should like to have stayed much longer in the peaceful little abode, which had a special history of its own.

In the same compound there stood, surrounded by beautiful trees, a large many-roomed bungalow, handsomely fitted up inside. In fact we heard that originally it had been meant for an hotel, but it was

now a private residence. Our 'Cottage' had formerly been part of this bungalow, but the owner, having come to the conclusion that the building was too large, had the excrescence cut off, lifted up and wheeled to a convenient distance! The lower part was then boarded in, and thus the two small rooms on the ground-floor were created. I have myself watched some Chinamen lift up a part of one of those wooden houses with a powerful piece of machinery, and dexterously remove a pile almost eaten away by white ants, and replace the same with a sound piece of timber.

But however much we had enjoyed being in the 'Cottage,' we could not remain there; for there was work awaiting us which we ought not to shrink from, whatever sacrifice it might involve.

Those brave words of Kingsley were often in our minds:—

"Let us forward. God leads us. Though blind, shall we be afraid to follow? I do not see my way: I do not care to: but I know that He sees His way, and that I see Him."

The furniture had been ordered and was being made in the prison, where the Burmese carpenters turned out excellent and solid workmanship—furniture in fact that would not fall to pieces at the end of the first rainy season.

The Chinese carpenters in the town offered to do the work for a good deal less, but prudence would not allow us to accept the offer. We were never disappointed in anything that came from the prison workshops. The Burmese carving, executed within those gigantic walls, is most chaste and beautiful. The Bishop himself possesses a sideboard which is quite a work of art. A number of coolies from India were always employed in carrying the large, heavy almirahs, etc., to their destinations with admirable skill and swiftness. The prisoners were never allowed to do work of this kind, although they were often seen in the large vegetable gardens outside the prison walls.

Our furniture was all made of teak-wood, which

white ants but seldom attack. It requires constant care, however, during the rains, otherwise a soft green shade of mildew would be seen within a few hours.

The Bombay-Burma Trading Company possesses large forests of this valuable timber in Upper Burma, and elephants are found most valuable in lifting and stacking the large trunks, in preparation for transportation down the river.

"I wonder how many pupils we shall have on the opening day. It is rather an anxious time, isn't it, with a rent of Rs.150 to meet?"

"Well, sometimes," replied Sister Esther, "I think we shall have fifty—sometimes five—and sometimes *none!*"

"I suppose we can only wait and be hopeful," was my response. "If complaints mean a flourishing enterprise, ours will certainly be a magnificent undertaking!"

"I really could not help being amused this morning," Sister Esther continued cheerfully, "when I went down to the building in the Cathedral Compound; I wish you had been there, Sister, to listen to all that was said. I was informed that the new house was too large, by some of the parents who assembled to interview us; others said it was too small. Some found fault because it was too near Cantonments, and others because it was too far from the town. A few declared the rooms would be trying because the verandahs were not wide enough to keep off the sun; and others that no work could be done because the building was so dark. I really felt quite bewildered at the end of half-an-hour, and came to the natural conclusion that it seemed impossible to please anybody. I almost wished we had carried out your suggestion, and gone into tents in spite of the monsoon."

"Ah! but during your absence I heard the *strongest* reason of all why it was wrong to take the house. We shall be too near St. John's College! Was I aware, so my irate visitor inquired, of the



*disastrous consequences, the appalling results of being in such close proximity to a Burmese college?"*

Now at this time Dr. Marks, the veteran S.P.G. missionary, was in charge of that valuable institution; and I felt quite convinced he had sufficient influence over the pupils to keep them in excellent order. I had not the slightest fear upon the subject; and what happened during our residence in Rangoon fully carried out my opinion. Not once had I any complaint whatever to carry to Dr. Marks. Indeed it became one of our greatest pleasures to attend the services in the College chapel, which was three minutes' walk from Arracan House.

"It is only a passing storm," hopefully remarked Sister Esther. "Presently we shall remember with amusement our first trials in Rangoon. It is far better they should come now than later."

"Of course the discipline is very defective, and we must fall back upon the elder girls to help us."

"Yes," said Sister Esther, "the very first day we must take them into our confidence, and make them feel that the welfare of the school depends a good deal on themselves and their influence."

And the result of this step was excellent.

At last the day came when the bullock-cart again appeared. Our possessions were once more packed up, and we departed, Sister Esther with the inkbottle again under her special care, to take up our abode in Arracan House.

We were both rather glad that it was, as usual, a dark, gloomy day, for the weather corresponded with our feelings on that occasion; we had grown so attached to the 'Cottage' that we did not like to bid it farewell.

We had several days of what we chose to call "coolie" work—that is, our English energy seemed suddenly to revive, and we hurried about carrying tables and chairs, and trying to get the furniture into its proper place, much to the amazement of the native servants, who were accustomed to much more listless ways.

Our first thought was as to the position of the Oratory, and then the other rooms were easily arranged. The big centre room up-stairs proved from the first a very valuable class-room; and looked, with its sea-green walls, and numerous pictures and plants, extremely attractive.

Of course, by the evening our English energy had considerable subsided, and we had only strength left for a little walk in the damp Compound *if* it were not raining.

"I want to ask Mrs. Harcourt something about the house, so, if you don't mind, Sister, after Vespers I will go to her whilst you rest;" and Sister Esther readily assented.

I found Mrs. Harcourt in her pretty drawing-room. There was a sad expression on her face which pained me to see. How I wished it might be possible to ease the burden which, I felt sure, was pressing upon her. And there were troubles in the past, which had left their mark upon her firm, lovable character; besides the anxious looking forward to the future which was hers also.

"Sit down, Sister, please, and stay a little while if you can. My husband has been out all day. I have not seen you for a long time, not since I told you not to expect letters from me."

"Oh! yes, I remember. Is the hand better?"

"No—it never can be that; the injury was done long ago; and no strength has or will ever come back. I tell very few people about it, but I should like you to know."

I saw how nervous she had become; there was some event in the past, the remembrance of which was clearly agitating her.

"It is best to try to forget; but sometimes the scene returns so vividly—as it has this evening sitting here alone; perhaps loneliness is not good for me."

"I should like to hear more, that is, if telling me will not pain you too much."

"Several years ago," Mrs. Harcourt continued, "when I was staying at Singapore, a servant, who

had been before in our employ, begged to return with us to Rangoon. The only difficulty was, that he had no money available for his passage; this I offered to advance, with the clear understanding that the amount should be refunded out of his wages. All went well at first. In time I naturally suggested that some of the money should be paid back each month. This I found raised, at once, his anger; he was partly of Malay origin, and of course I should not have trusted him. His manner became very strange, and I commenced to have an instinctive shrinking whenever he came near me. The subject of the passage money seemed to irritate him more each month. But at last a set purpose of some kind appeared to take possession of him, and from that day I noticed he became very silent. I had not the slightest idea what was brooding in his mind." Mrs. Harcourt paused for a moment; she was trembling with nervous excitement, the past was evidently only too present to her. I asked no questions, and she continued: "One day, unknown to anybody, he stayed behind when all the other servants went to their rice, and, with a murderous intention in his heart, he fastened the gates leading into our compound—tied our little dog up—and then . . . 'Will mem-sahib please give me a little oil?' he asked, with assumed politeness, when, after a general inspection of the house, he found me in the drawing-room. 'You can go to the store-room, and take what you want,' I replied, and then suddenly his whole manner changed, and a dhá gleamed in his hand. Oh! I shall never forget how I went down on my knees and begged him not to kill me! . . . He stabbed me again and again. At last my screams were heard by my faithful brave dog; with a frantic effort he freed himself, and came bounding up-stairs to my rescue and flew at the Malay. He rushed away when he found himself attacked. Almost dead with loss of blood and the utter terror I had passed through, I still had the presence of mind to drag myself down-stairs and across the compound until I reached a friend's house,

and then I knew no more—I had fainted. The Malay was found in the town, near the Law Courts, strange to say, and was there arrested. My life hung for weeks upon a thread, but at last I commenced to regain my strength, and then found that my hand, which I had raised to ward off a blow, was, and would be always, useless. The Malay, of course, was tried and transported to the Andamans. But I have never quite recovered the shock."

## CHAPTER VII

## OUR CHILDREN

"**W**HO can this be coming into the compound in such grand style?" we exclaimed one morning as a splendid white horse advanced towards us. High up on the saddle sat a little fair-haired boy, and behind, some way down the road, came the Syce.

"My mother called to see you yesterday, and you said I might come to school to-day, and so I have."

Oh! yes, we remembered all about the interview. Arthur was the little son of one of the officers in Cantonments.

"What shall you do about the horse?" I asked.

"That's my father's charger," he answered proudly; "he says I may use him every morning until I can have a pony of my own. The Syce will take him home all right, and the carriage will come for me in the afternoon. Have Wattie and Charlie come yet?" he asked, looking round the class-rooms with interest.

"I don't know," was my reply. "Who are they? I have not heard their names before."

"They are my best friends, and they said they would come to-day for the first time, and Winifred too, but she isn't their sister—she's my great friend too." As he spoke two pretty white ponies came trotting up, and in the closed carriage were seated,

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under the guardianship of a very solemn Chupprasse, the two little boys Arthur had referred to. Their father was also an officer, in fact that morning we admitted a number of children from Cantonments.

Charlie and Wattie were in great spirits that day, and had evidently made up their minds thoroughly to enjoy themselves. They were only six and seven years of age, and as long as the solemn Chupprasse was in sight their conduct was exemplary. Later on, we might have wished for some improvement. But in spite of the attention they required we became extremely fond of these children, and quite missed them when they were absent for a day. They possessed English energy, and could not possibly for the first few weeks be persuaded to sit still for more than five minutes at a time in spite of their tropical surroundings. We felt thankful that all our pupils were not quite so restless.

This morning, in the brief space of ten minutes, Wattie managed to upset a bottle of red ink—then an earthenware water-jar came to grief and a small river was created—and, lastly, a flourishing palm-tree was knocked over, Wattie and Charlie having entered into military warfare. Finally, Wattie seated himself on the bamboo mat in our little writing-room and refused to move.

"I'm a Chinaman!" he suddenly informed me.

"Oh! I thought you were an English boy."

"No, I'm not—I'm a Chinaman; Charlie's a Chinaman too, and Winifred's a Japanese lady."

The conversation had become mysterious and interesting.

"Mother says you ought to see us in our new clothes—such nice clothes."

"When do you wear them?" I ventured to inquire.

"Oh! we haven't worn them yet."

"Shall you go to church in them on Sunday?"

"Father wouldn't let us! Charlie has blue trousers, and a white jacket, and a *lovely* long pig-tail—mother made it herself—and I've the same. Winifred's clothes are quite different—she's a lady, of course. Come, I'll

show you what we do ;" and he scrambled up and dashed into the class-room where Winifred was demurely writing, and seized her hand, and before the astonished children went through various graceful antics which he chose to call a Japanese dance. Winifred did her part well, and was evidently flattered by the admiration of the audience.

But this could not possibly continue—where was the discipline of the lower school ?

"Never mind," whispered Wattie, as I conducted Winifred back to her seat. "Never mind, we will do it again at tiffin-time."

And so they did, after partaking hastily of their dainty refreshment of fruit and biscuits, whilst their attentive men-servants stood behind, and anticipated their smallest want.

When school was over I was occupied in one of the class-rooms, and a teacher was superintending the departure of the children. This was no easy matter, for there was a line of carriages of all sizes and descriptions waiting to take the pupils to their various homes. Very few of our children walked to school—the distances were great, and, especially during the monsoon, they could not be exposed to the heavy rains.

There was evidently something wrong, so I came to the conclusion as I heard voices raised as if in entreaty.

It was Wattie who was giving trouble—nothing would induce him to take a seat in the carriage. The Syce knew perfectly well that the ponies were wanted to take mem-sahib a drive to the Royal Lakes, and here was the child, whom they treated like a young Rajah, in a temper and refusing to move. What was to be done ?

"Wattie need not go home unless he likes ; he can stay with the Sisters ; 'jeldi jao,'" I said, turning to the Syce ; he was only too glad to obey, and the ponies trotted off briskly. But this was not at all what Wattie meant, and he uttered an appalling scream as he saw the conveyance fast disappearing ;

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then, gathering all his strength together, he dashed down the road after it.

I do not remember that he ever refused again to get into the carriage when he was told to.

Before long we discovered why Wattie had declared that he was a Chinaman, and Winifred a Japanese lady. Our kind friends in Cantonments were getting up the first entertainment at the Gymkhana for our benefit ; and a great success it proved.

We had the pleasure of seeing the children in their costumes the day before they made their appearance in public, and very attractive and funny they looked. Their mother was a most devoted woman ; so good and patient with these restless little boys. She was ill at the time we knew her, and we felt sure her state was not realized. I knew from what she told me that her troublesome cough meant something very serious. The future seemed to be hidden from her, and I dared not, by look or word, reveal my sad thoughts.

We had much to be thankful for even in those early days, for already a number of pupils were under our care of various ages, and new names were being entered nearly every day. From the first the elder girls fell in wonderfully with our rules, which were few, but had to be strictly carried out, and their influence was felt throughout the school.

But the most interesting part of our work was still to come. From the first we looked forward to the time when it might become possible for children from a distance to live with us.

Already some reference had been made, in the letters from England, to two English ladies who wished to join us as voluntary helpers. Sister Esther often amused herself by drawing a dismal picture, for my edification, of the elderly appearance of these ladies, until I really commenced to have grave misgivings.

"Supposing they can't do anything when they arrive?" argued Sister Esther, and I felt quite unable to make any reply until further details should reach me.

Having at last taken a house, we were anxious to find a good reliable 'Boy,' our present servant was leaving shortly for India.

We made various inquiries in different directions, and in a few days a fine Madrasee presented himself on the verandah and handed me with profound "salaams" his *chits*. Strange to say, they were not pre-historic, like others I had seen, and they bore evident signs of belonging to himself; he was too respectable to be obliged to *borrow* letters of recommendation from his friends in the bazaar.

"Tumhārā nām kyā hai?" I asked; and the answer was, "Sam," which certainly has no oriental origin.

The last *chit* was of recent date; he had only just left this Sahib, and I read the note with interest. It announced the fact that Sam had been in his service six weeks, and a very high opinion had been formed of the man's character—in fact, Sam had performed many little acts of attention, and had won his master's golden opinion in six weeks! I read the note more than once, thinking there must be some mistake. Should not the "six weeks" have been "six years"? But no, there it was in black and white, and I had been told that at the end of twenty-five years one might even then speak with hesitation of a native's characteristics.

Sam came, however, and proved himself a valuable and intelligent servant. At the end of some months he one day approached me with a very long and serious face—serious he generally was, for had he not a position to maintain amongst the other servants?

He held in his hand a legal-looking blue paper—quite blank, but it was imposing in appearance with its Government stamp. I gazed at it as Sam held it up for my inspection, but it conveyed nothing to my mind; how could it?

"What is amiss?" I asked, looking at his thoughtful, sad face.

"Great trouble coming," he replied, "my house in town going to be sold because I have no money."

I felt much distressed at this announcement, and



asked how much was wanted. But Sam seemed to think that nobody could help him except his brother, who lived up the river at Henzada.

"Will Sister give me leave to go? I finding a good 'Boy' to do my work; I coming back in few days to Sister's house."

It was useless, of course, to argue the point. There was that legal-looking paper which pointed towards a lawsuit unless Sam could arrange matters.

"Bring a trustworthy man and tell him your duties before you leave, and come back as soon as you can," were my last instructions that morning as Sam, still looking very distressed, departed to take his mid-day rice.

The same evening Sam's deputy arrived. I was struck with the man's appearance, he was certainly weak and ill, but Sam assured me that his friend only had slight fever and would soon be well again. So matters arranged themselves. For a few days the new 'Boy' did his work well, but there was always an ominous cough which attracted my attention. Was he consumptive? At the end of the week he arrived a miserable object, shivering from time to time, and evidently with a good deal of fever—that day he went to his mid-day meal and did not return.

At last, when a fortnight had passed and the new 'Boy' was again at work, looking thinner and more miserable than before, I ventured to address cook upon the subject of Sam's absence.

"When will he be back, do you think? We can't go on with this poor man much longer."

The Mahometan looked at me, and I saw just a shadow of scorn pass over his face. There was no friendship between Sam and himself, they were separated by the impassable barrier of caste and religion. Sam, he assured me, was *not* coming back, he had gone straight from us to a rich Sahib, where he was getting much higher wages.

No doubt the sick 'Boy' had given Sam a nice little present for putting him into a situation even for a short time.

I need scarcely add that Sam never applied to me for a letter of recommendation ; no doubt he still has in his possession that excellent testimonial which he presented for my perusal.

## CHAPTER VIII

## A VISIT TO KEMMENDINE

**W**HEN we had been settled in Arracan House a few weeks, the Director of Public Instruction paid us a visit, and was much pleased with all he saw. He had already approved of the furniture, which had been made more or less under his supervision. We always found him a most kind and thoughtful adviser ; and it became quite natural to go to his office in the town and to discuss with him any matter of difficulty.

That morning when he paid his first visit, one of the Burmese mothers also appeared. She had some question to ask about her child who was in the school.

We found her upon the lower verandah smoking an enormous cigar, and looking very picturesque in a spotless white muslin jacket, pale-green silk lungi, soft yellow silk scarf round her neck, and some sweet-scented blossom in her hair. Her attitude was quite unique. She was squatting in true Burmese style, not on the ground, but on a *chair*, and in that elegant attitude, scarcely taking the trouble to remove the cigar from between her lips, she addressed, with no air of shyness, the Director of Public Instruction.

The time for Sister Esther's return to India was close at hand, and I contemplated with feelings of sadness my approaching loneliness. Her visit had been a very happy one, and we had been able, I am thankful to say, to smile over our first trials, which were fast disappearing.

On Saturday afternoon I suggested that we should drive over to Kemmendine.

"Oh! yes; that would be delightful," she exclaimed. "I have been longing to see St. Michael's, but really until now we have not had an hour to spare. Please ask Malee to get a sensible gharri-wallah and a well-behaved pony."

"I'm afraid my command of Hindoostani is not equal to such expressions — but we haven't been upset yet, so we must not complain," I replied.

"Some of the gharri-wallahs are very cruel; Mrs. Johnston told me that she watched a man the other day take his pony under the shadow of a tree and beat it unmercifully, just because it couldn't go as fast as he wanted. She took down his number, and he had to pay a heavy fine. I think she was brave, because he might have tried to take his revenge."

That afternoon, I am glad to say, we had an intelligent man and a good pony, and, therefore, much enjoyed the drive.

We wanted to keep a little conveyance of our own, but found this would be too expensive. Very often during our stay in Rangoon, friends asked us to use their carriages, and we always gladly and gratefully accepted the offer.

The springs of that vehicle in which we went to Kemmendine were non-existent, and the rattle of the little venetian windows, which did not fit properly, was considerable; but in spite of these drawbacks we managed to have a good deal of conversation, chiefly about the two ladies who were expected to arrive in October, four months hence.

"I feel sure they will prove to be elderly, sedate people," remarked Sister Esther.

"But why do you say *elderly*?" I asked.

"Because I have some dim recollection of having heard just before I left for Rangoon that they were both over fifty."

"I wonder how they think we live out in the East?"

"In a little bamboo house, not too weather-proof; with only curry and rice to eat, and mats to sleep on at night. It would be cheap to begin with, but expensive in the end."

"But what shall I give them to do?" I asked, with real misgivings. "They will not like school-work if they are so aged; the education of our girls will have no missionary aspect for them, I feel sure."

"Well, I think," said Sister Esther, trying her best to look very serious, "you might suggest a visit to the Pagoda."

"Not every day!"

"Well, perhaps not *every* day; but there they could study Burmese life to perfection, and possibly in time, if they do not develop any other talents, they might write a book; most people write books now about countries in which they have spent less than six weeks, and these ladies are coming, I think, for three years."

"If they hear about the lepers begging on the steps of the Pagoda, they will be shocked."

"Oh! but you mustn't mention anything about lepers. I am sure they won't notice the poor creatures unless their attention is drawn to the fact. And then, besides the Pagoda and occasional visits to the Royal Lakes, ask them to make purchases for you in the cloth bazaar."

"Such an exhausting process."

"But they will enjoy it. Ayah can go with them in the early morning. There they will see quite another side of life in Rangoon. Of course you will warn them to pay just one-third what they are asked. I always come away with the uncomfortable feeling that I have spent more than needful, if only my patience would have held out for another hour or so."

"But they ought to have a Munshi, and begin at once to learn *one* of the languages."

"Which do you think would be the most useful?" asked Sister Esther. "As they are elderly ladies they will find Hindoostani possibly the easiest; but besides that, there is, of course, a grand choice. I came across an expression a few days ago in one of the educational books, where Burma is spoken of as the 'hunting-ground' of oriental languages."

"Burmese might, in the end, be more useful, but it

is very difficult to acquire. We must leave that matter to be settled when they arrive, I suppose."

"And don't say anything about the *thieves*," wisely suggested Sister Esther, after a pause in the conversation. "You see, if they are not young, any shock will make them nervous, and to have two elderly nervous ladies upon your hands for *three* years would be rather trying."

"Very!"

"I can see them now," said Sister Esther, meditatively.

"See who?" I asked, looking out of the window.

"Oh! only the elderly ladies—in imagination; but I will spare your feelings, Sister."

"I wish you could be here when they arrive to help to receive them."

"You will manage that much better alone. I really expect at the end of *three* years they will prove to be charming."

"It seems a long time to look forward to," I said, rather solemnly.

During this conversation we had driven some distance down Kemmendine Road, which would take us almost in a straight line to St. Michael's Church.

For a time the road was crowded with men, women, children, and pariah dogs, at which our gharri-wallah shouted to his heart's content. But when we had driven some distance, the tall luxuriant trees, with the thick jungle behind, rose up on either side. A lonely road it was even during the day-time, and one we never cared to traverse after dark.

Kemmendine is three miles from Rangoon, on an elevation. Here it was that an engagement took place in 1824, between our soldiers and the brave warlike tribes who had collected to prevent our advance. A strong stockade had been erected by the enemy, and, in attempting to defend it, two hundred men lost their lives.

As we approached the extensive village, we realized that we were indeed strangers in a strange land, for





AN UP-COUNTRY ROAD.

*To face p. 53.*

on our left we came upon workshops filled with images of Gautama of all sizes, and in various stages of construction, and always in one of the three conventional attitudes. The faces bore the same expression of peaceful calmness; the eyes were wide apart; the brows well marked; the lips full, and the ears enormous, reaching down to the shoulders.

And where would these figures of Gautama find a resting-place when finished? At one of the many Pagodas. A Buddhist, who erects one of these centres of devotion, becomes very spiritual, so he believes, even here on earth, and when he dies he enters the rest of Nirvana. He has built the Pagoda to acquire merit—it matters little if it falls into decay; most probably it will, for no merit is acquired by the work of restoration.

The religion which Buddha proclaimed is a hard one, and although there is no God to cry to, yet human nature craves for sympathy, and for One to whom supplications may be addressed, and so it is believed, by those who know best, that the unlearned do in reality address Buddha in their prayers.

The road to Kemmendine had now assumed a different aspect; on the right, in a deep cutting, ran the railway; a very pretty route lies between Rangoon and Insein on this line.

Once more the broad roadway was well filled with natives belonging chiefly to this populous district. Soon the church came within sight, and we alighted. The gharri-wallah drew up his pony under the shadow of a tree, and went off leisurely to visit some friends until we should again require his services. The pariah dogs, treacherous creatures as they are, growled and snapped at us as we hurried past them.

In the centre of an open space, surrounded by a low wooden fence, stood the little church of St. Michael. It was built of wood, which the white ants carried off to an alarming extent each year. It was an expensive and unsatisfactory struggle to keep pace with them.

I am writing now of what was happening in 1894.



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Before I left Burma the foundation-stone of the permanent building of red brick was laid, and the east-end completed. A temporary nave was also added until more money should be forthcoming ; and in this nave, Sunday after Sunday, a large and devout congregation assembled.

Before we reached the little temporary building we came upon the dwellings of the Karen students, who were training for future usefulness amongst their own people in Upper Burma.

The Karens have very interesting traditions, which bear a strange resemblance to the account given in the Book of Genesis of the Creation of the World and the Deluge. They also have traditions of a promised Deliverer ; in fact, they possess the skeleton of our Faith, and thus it will be seen that conversion has no great obstacles to encounter ; the Karens are, in fact, Deists, and it is not found difficult for them to rise higher in the spiritual life and to embrace Christianity.

Various theories have been brought forward as to the origin of the Karens, but with no satisfactory result.

Dr. Mason, in the *Karen Apostle*, has given some of the traditions, which are so remarkable that we have nothing similar in these times amongst the writings of heathen nations.

“God formed the world formerly ;  
He appointed food and drink.  
He appointed the fruit of trial.  
He gave minute orders.  
Satan deceived two persons.  
He caused them to eat the fruit of the tree of trial.  
They obeyed not ; they believed not God.  
They ate the fruit of the tree of trial.  
They became subject to sickness, old age, and death.”

### THE DISPERSION OF MEN

“The Karens were the elder brother,  
They obtained all the words of God,  
They did not believe all the word of God,  
And became enemies to each other :  
Because they disbelieved God,  
*Their language divided.*”

## IDOLATRY

"O children and grandchildren ! do not worship priests. If you worship them, you obtain no advantage thereby, while you increase your sins exceedingly."

## NATIONAL TRADITIONS

## A PEOPLE BELOVED OF GOD

"O children and grandchildren ! formerly God loved the Karen nation above all others, but they transgressed His commands, and in consequence of their transgressions we suffer as at present. Because God cursed us, we are in our present afflicted state, and have no books. But God will again have mercy on us, and again He will love us above others. God will yet save us again ; it is on account of our listening to the language of Satan, that we thus suffer."

## THE RETURN OF GOD

"At the appointed season God will come ;  
The dead trees will blossom and flower ;  
When the appointed season comes God will arrive ;  
The mouldering trees will blossom and bloom again."

Who can read such words without feelings of amazement that such traditions should be the heritage of these people who inhabit the jungles and mountains of Upper Burma ? They have been oppressed by the Burmans, and yet have maintained their independence and live as a separate tribe.

Far away amongst the mountains of Toungoo dwells the Shako Mosha ; this is the Olympus of the Karens. Between two lofty peaks there is a sacred pool, and here, once a year, the Karens go to present offerings to the "Great Spirit," who dwells in the heights above and watches over their actions.

Further off, facing the church, rose the teak-wood house in which the mission priest and his family lived. On the ground-floor was a study, well filled with valuable books which had been much injured by the climate. This invariably happens unless the utmost care is taken during the rains. It is no exaggeration to say that a library will literally "fall to pieces" during those six damp months.

This afternoon we were disappointed to find that our kind friends had driven into the town by the Upper Kemmendine Road, and we had thus missed them.

Later on, I spent many happy, quiet hours on the pretty verandah, during the time our children were away from Rangoon.

## CHAPTER IX

### LONELINESS

**W**OULD St. Francis have loved the crows? That was the question I asked myself, with ruffled feelings, as I watched a crowd of these black-winged creatures enjoying the toast which Ayah had brought for my chota hazari. There they were in the garden, just below my window, making a fearful noise and flurry over the stolen repast. And the act had been such an audacious one, for the guilty, ill-behaved crow had actually seized the toast out of my hand.

No; I did not think even the saintly Francis of Assisi would have easily overlooked such a breach of manners.

Only the day before, 'Boy' and I had had a discussion over the missing tea-spoons; three new ones could not be found, and Antony had cleared the matter up by informing me that the crows had taken them. I could not say much, for quite lately a greedy bird had flown off to the nearest tree with a table-spoon, and finding it too heavy, had dropped it in the compound. Fortunately those two words, "Crow taking," seemed to place Antony always in an unapproachable position of honesty and uprightness.

Of course St. Francis had no Nevada tea-spoons to lose, and sometimes I wished we had not either. The crows had great pugilistic powers, and seemed thoroughly to enjoy a general riot amongst themselves, especially when night was coming on. But

they warmly resented any interference on the part of others ; and they would work themselves up into a state of fury if one of their companions was captured and carried off by a native. At one hour only did they seem to be of any use, and that was when the first streak of daylight appeared, and they told us it was time to ring the rising-bell.

That morning of which I am writing, I had quite sufficient upon my mind without the mortification of losing my early tea, for Sister Esther was about to return to Madras, and the sad, heavy sky represented my feelings.

"My dear Sister," I said, as she joined me, "I went down to the ship to welcome you, but I could not possibly go to see you off."

"Oh! I *am* sorry to leave," she replied; "and I shall often think of the happy time we have spent together. Please tell me all about the elderly ladies when they arrive. October will soon be here, and then you will be lonely no longer."

"You will have a bad passage, I am afraid. It seems such a pity you are obliged to go back before the storms are over."

As we were talking footsteps sounded below, and the welcome and familiar voice of the tapal-wallah was heard.

"Postman, mem-sahib, English mail." Out of his big leather bag the Madrasee produced a parcel of letters and magazines, all very welcome. We never seemed further from home than when we had to wait for a reply to our inquiries. That "sea-post" appeared then as a real enemy ; but the long waiting taught us, I hope, many lessons of patience which in this age of hurry and haste were very necessary. Amongst the letters that day was a "deferred" telegram ; it did not create much excitement, as we only looked upon these messages as ordinary letters. Those cheap telegrams were most useful to people who lived in Upper Burma, where postal arrangements took a long time to carry out.

There was only one kind of message which I shrank

from receiving, and that was the yellow telegram from England, which was delivered with much ceremony by a very superior Peon, usually in the middle of the night. It was the rule to dispatch these important telegrams at whatever hour they might arrive from home, and we were about six hours in advance of London time.

"I am so glad to get my letters before sailing. Now, I wonder if you have any news about the future work here. Do open the London letters first," urged Sister Esther, as she took a seat, and with some excitement commenced to scan the epistles before her.

"Yes ; here is something about my helpers who are to arrive in a few months. This is what the Sisters say : 'Miss Lennox and Miss Moore are looking forward so much to their visit to Rangoon ; we are sure they will be a great assistance to you. Miss Lennox has a good voice and is musical. We do not know in what direction Miss Moore's special talent lies, but you will soon find out for yourself. Just now they are paying farewell visits to their relations, and we shall only see them for a few days before they sail.'"

"The mystery is solved," triumphantly exclaimed Sister Esther. "Miss Lennox is young, beautiful, and clever !"

"And Miss Moore ?"

"Oh, she is evidently the elderly lady I have heard about before," replied Sister Esther ; "but really she will be very useful, for she will be able, as it were, to 'mount guard' over Miss Lennox."

"Well, it is useless now to ask for further information ; we must hope for the best ; perhaps, after all, both of them will be charming ; elderly people are often very sensible and kind. But a woman over forty years of age who has allowed contact with the world to deprive her of gentle loving ways is indeed an object to be pitied. I remember a remark made by Florence Nightingale, that she had heard, with feelings of deepest regret, a woman, past the prime of life, speak to a little child in a way that would have

pained a girl of twenty. I am sure it is very necessary that Sisters as well as seculars should constantly pray to be kept tender-hearted."

A few short hours after this conversation had taken place, the Madras steamer was rolling and tossing in the Bay of Bengal, and a cyclone might at any time be expected.

Many friends were now coming forward with offers of help ; and indeed it appeared that, although I was alone, my loneliness was to be cheered, as much as possible, by the sympathy and kindness of comparative strangers.

But I will frankly allow that the first rainy season through which I passed in Rangoon was a real time of trial. I had never heard before that dismal and constant sound of falling rain ; I had never seen furniture and books turn green with mildew ; and the very primitive mode of airing, which is adopted with certainly much success in Burma, was quite a revelation to me.

First of all Ayah requested me to buy a large bamboo kind of hen-coop from the jail workshop ; the size was considerable, for Ayah herself might comfortably have taken a seat under it. Would I please tell Malee to get a little earthenware chattie ? Yes, certainly ; and what else did Ayah require for her extensive operations ? Only a sack of coke, which cook would get in the bazaar. And how much would be used every day ? A handful or so, was the reassuring answer ; for a fear of increased housekeeping expenses had arisen in my mind. So matters were settled, and the orders given for the hen-coop, the coke and the chattie, which became almost constant occupants of my room. But there was one thing more that had been forgotten. Would Sister give "pice" for a little incense which Ayah would buy herself ? What did Ayah want incense for ? I naturally inquired. Oh ! to "make sweet the air," Ayah informed me, for the atmosphere, on account of the continued damp, had become very trying. So she had the "pice," and

bought the incense, with which she daily fumigated the rooms.

When we took Arracan House we quite imagined that our anxieties in connection with a permanent residence had faded away, and now I became painfully aware that a change in the near future might become necessary. The house, to my dismay, was advertised to be sold, and the purchaser might very possibly wish to occupy the building himself.

A few weeks after the first advertisement appeared, a large Burmese gong was placed opposite Arracan House, and a Burman took up his station near it, and a most melancholy booming sound commenced as if calling us all to a funeral. I could not bear to think that poor Mrs. Harcourt was watching the scene from her windows, and that she could even hear the would-be purchasers discussing the sale price. The sound of that dismal gong continued until Arracan House had passed into the hands of strangers; and when the exciting event was over, we learnt that the new landlord was willing to allow us to remain unless unforeseen circumstances should arise.

The building in the Cathedral Compound was at that time used for resident pupils who attended our school, but were not under our care out of school hours. Later on the house became the residence of the Head-Master of the Boys' School; a son of one of our great divines and a scholar.

The sale of Arracan House had clearly revealed our very uncertain position, and on that account I sought an interview with Sir Alexander Mackenzie at Government House. The building in which he most kindly received me was not the handsome Government House now occupied by Sir Frederick Fryer, which was finished some time before I left Burma.

We discussed the relative positions of two sites which were considered advantageous for our High School. I knew if land could be acquired, a new and *commodious* building would become a possibility.

I have a very grateful recollection of that interview, which, however, did not result in any decisive movement, and soon after Sir Alexander Mackenzie returned to India.

## CHAPTER X

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

**N**OW eagerly I listened for the three guns which would tell me of the arrival off Rangoon of the Madras steamer!

The last touches had been given to the rooms which Miss Lennox and Miss Moore were to occupy, and I wondered much what they would think of their new quarters, all so different to the homes they had left behind. They were *both* young, so I had learnt from letters lately received.

The heat and fatigue of the day had been very great. I was resting for a few minutes with a book in my hand, and the sun was disappearing behind the palm-trees when the familiar signals went off.

One . . . two . . . three . . . Oh! the excitement and anxiety of that moment! They were really here—close at hand; before an hour would have passed we should have seen each other face to face. Would it be a pleasant surprise? Or should we live to grieve that we had ever met? Eight thousand miles these two brave girls had placed between themselves and their homes; and I thanked God that by this act of generous self-sacrifice my days of loneliness, as far as I could see into the future, were at an end.

When I reached the landing-stage darkness had come on. A lurid light was cast by a blazing torch. The *Nerbudda* had not yet come to her moorings, but her outline we could distinctly see. I say "we," because by this time a Mrs. Wallace had joined me, whose husband was on board the steamer. Together we watched her slow movements; the delay seemed endless.



At last my friend, who had better sight than myself, and far greater powers of imagination, told me with delight that she could discern two English girls standing together on the deck.

"How are they dressed?" I asked anxiously, for there was still a lingering hope in my mind that they might have attired themselves in some sort of uniform.

"They have black cloaks on, turn-down collars, and simple black bonnets, with a good deal of white; they both look very sweet and interesting," was the reassuring reply.

After this I did not ask for further information, but I have often wondered since that evening if Mr. Wallace had the same imaginative powers as his wife; if so the result must have been extremely interesting, and possibly perplexing to their circle of friends.

At last the gangway was lowered, and I hurried on board followed by Mrs. Wallace, who was far too engrossed in her husband's welfare to give a second thought to the two girls who were certainly *not* on the deck. I found them, after a short time of anxious searching, in the saloon outside their cabin, waiting, with all the calmness they could command, for my arrival.

I can see them now as I write these words, standing there, as if no time had intervened to change their surroundings.

How shall I describe them both?

Very beautiful was Geraldine Moore, *that* I saw at a glance. She looked about twenty years of age, certainly not older. The sad and yet sweet expression of her face spoke of a formed character even at that early age, and a power of decision unusual in one so young. The large brown eyes seemed to yearn for affection and sympathy. But her slight graceful figure and delicate complexion made me fear from the first that she was not strong. She proved herself to be a clever, upright, honourable girl whom none could fail to admire. Always equal to any emergency—calm and collected in the midst of

the dangers and trials of our daily life in far-off Burma.

And what of Amy Lennox ?

I felt the nobility of her character directly we met. She stood there a great contrast to Geraldine Moore—tall and handsome, with laughing blue eyes and fair hair. She possessed to a wonderful extent that blessed gift of making others happy, and looking on the bright side of things, even on the darkest day. There were powers yet undeveloped in her strong, lovable disposition. A more courageous, truer character I have never met, one who, having made up her mind to a course of action, would be faithful to the end. Her father, an aged priest, had given up his child willingly, though the separation had caused them both much suffering. In fact, as Amy often told me afterwards, she had not *chosen* the work in the East, but a Voice had been calling her for some years—a Voice which could not be disobeyed. And so she had come in all the trustfulness of her brave nature, believing she was acting in answer to a Divine call, and she never regretted the step thus taken.

But where were the uniforms ? The cloaks were not to be seen, the quiet bonnets had vanished—in fact they had only existed in Mrs. Wallace's fertile imagination, and I had to reconcile myself to the fact that these two girls were dressed in very pretty cool garments suitable for the tropics.

The Chaplain's Peon had come down to the steamer with me, and he was quite equal to taking all the luggage under his care, so we were soon ready to drive off from the landing-stage. The streets looked very dark that night, and I could not point out any places of interest ; neither could we have much conversation, for the gharri, as usual, created a good deal of noise of its own special kind.

But when we reached Arracan House all was bright and cheerful. The servants eyed the new Missie from far-off England with suitable respect and wonder. Malee had a bunch of flowers ready for each of them, and 'Boy,' with admirable thought, had cleverly

designed upon the table-cloth, with many coloured leaves, a ship in full sail.

"I know the servants will give you each a special name," I remarked as we stood upon the verandah.

"What will be my title?" asked Amy Lennox, smiling.

"Oh! you are known already as the '*burra Missie*'—'*Burra*' means big—and Miss Moore will certainly be addressed as '*chota Missie*.' Now come up-stairs and I will show you your rooms."

I felt how strange everything was to these two girls who had never left England before. Geraldine told me later on that the East had always had a special fascination for her, although she could not understand the reason why. Her father was an officer in the army who had never seen foreign service; but the longing to work somewhere in the tropics had taken possession of her, and had increased as she grew older.

"How delightful our rooms are!" she exclaimed, glancing round with evident pleasure, "and the house is so refreshingly cool after the long sea voyage."

"The steamer to Bombay was simply crowded," put in Amy. "Oh! I shall never forget the heat in the Red Sea; and the journey to Madras in that dreadful train was even worse!"

"I am afraid you will find the noise here very trying at first," I explained, "because all the classrooms are full during the day. Soon I hope we shall be able to take another house, and then we shall have more room and more children too."

"I never expected anything like this," remarked Amy, "the colouring of the wall is so pretty, and I think the way the house is built is quite fascinating. I really came out prepared to live in a bamboo hut!"

"And have nothing but curry and rice to eat," put in Geraldine.

I smiled at the recollection of Sister Esther's remarks some months before; but by this time the elderly nervous ladies, with no special talents, had almost faded from my memory.

"Oh! you will have plenty of trials without the hut and the native food," I said, laughing, "but you have come out brave and ready to face difficulties, which is a great step onwards."

We chatted on happily enough during dinner, and commenced to feel that we were no longer strangers. Nothing was said about work that evening; in fact I insisted upon a week's rest, which was really necessary after the long time spent upon the uncertain sea. But at the end of that time they courageously took up their share of the work, in spite of the oppressive heat, which tried them more than they would acknowledge.

Their surroundings were so entirely new that I am sure they felt like uprooted plants, and added to other difficulties the servants were a mystery to them, and the caste question a mystery too; and the mosquitoes were ravenous.

One morning a few weeks after the arrival of my kind helpers a curious underground noise was heard approaching. There was no time to wonder what this weird sound could be, for the house rocked to and fro as if it had been made of cardboard instead of iron-like teak-wood.

Geraldine with a pale distressed face came to me in the Oratory.

"What *is* amiss, Sister? what *has* happened?" she asked in amazement.

"It is an earthquake, I'm afraid," was my reply, as I gazed at the ceiling and wondered how soon we should be buried alive. I happened to remember the sensation of a similar shock at Sorrento.

"What a horrible feeling it gives one of insecurity," gasped Amy, who had now joined us in the verandah.

"I hope the house is safe," said Geraldine as she glanced round, expecting to see some of the walls give way.

"Well, dear, I know that this is one of the best houses in Rangoon, so if it suffers many others will too—but that is scarcely a consolation."

The servants went about their duties troubled in

mind, for they were naturally very timid and superstitious.

"I wonder if we shall have any more shocks," remarked Amy as the time for school approached. "If so, many of the children will surely stay away."

She had scarcely uttered the words when the same rumbling sound was heard—and again the house rocked and reeled. We simply gazed at each other with astonishment until all was quiet again.

"It is just like being on board ship in a heavy sea," exclaimed Amy, turning very white.

All through that long day we had an earthquake about every two hours. The class-rooms were as full as usual, and the teachers and children behaved splendidly. Only two nervous little people commenced to sob as the afternoon wore on, and they were brought to my writing-room on the verandah to be consoled. I saw how over-strung Amy and Geraldine had become, and begged of them to give up their work and rest for an hour.

"Oh! no, thank you, Sister," Amy said, as another shock more severe than the preceding ones shook the house. "We would rather die with the children. But here is a Peon from the jail; he has brought a *chit* for you."

The letter had been hastily written by the superintendent, asking us to keep his little girls for the present as the prison walls were unsafe, and the children could not return that night to their charming suite of rooms overlooking Commissioner's Road. "A bungalow is being prepared for my family," so the *chit* ran, "not far from you, and directly it is ready I will send a servant for the children."

So Enid, Constance, and Mary had to remain with us for a time. They were a good deal excited, and wanted us to tell them why they could not go home at once. As darkness came on an Ayah appeared for them, and we felt sure they would quite enjoy the novelty of their new quarters.

Several "pucca" buildings, besides the prison, were

found to be insecure that day, and the handsome new Law Courts did not escape their share of damage.

"Well, Sister, come see cook-house?" It was 'Boy' who made the request, our Mahometan cook had sent him with the message.

"What is amiss?" I asked; the cook-house was still in existence, I could see *that* from where I was standing.

"Wall very bad," replied 'Boy,' looking solemn.

Amy was standing by my side, and asked to be allowed to accompany me on a tour of inspection.

"I hope the roof of our funny little kitchen won't fall in whilst we are there!" I exclaimed, leading the way under a covered passage—a very convenient arrangement for the rainy season, otherwise our meals might often have been washed away between cook's dominions and 'Boy's' serving-room. I did not often enter that kitchen, because the Mahometan reigned there supreme; and any interference on my part would certainly have been resented. But this time we had received an invitation, which was quite a different matter.

Cook in his white clothes looked spotless; the kitchen was spotless—the many (*empty?*) tea-tins, cocoa-tins, biscuit-tins, mustard-tins, etc., were shining like silver; lengthy preparations must have been made for our arrival. The only unattractive object to be seen was the cook's matee, who was hurriedly invited by his master to depart until we should have retired.

Cook salaamed, and looked more thoughtful than usual. He had had during that long day grave misgivings as to the probability of the earth opening and swallowing him up kitchen and all—the "all" represented little enough.

"What has happened to the wall?" I asked. I could only see rather a wide crack over the doorway.

"Earthquake very bad," explained cook, "big hole coming."

"Oh! but it hasn't come yet—there's nothing to be afraid of," I cheerfully replied. "I thought some

part of the wall had come down from what 'Boy' told me."

"What does he *cook* with?" asked Amy, with recollections in her mind of the elaborate cooking apparatus which she had left behind in the far West. The Mahometan had heard her question.

"A spoon I using," he said proudly, holding up a fairly large one to her astonished gaze. "Now I making custard-pudding for dinner," and so he was, with an ingenuity worthy of a native of India. The pudding was covered over with half a kerosene oil-tin, and on the top had been placed a handful or so of charcoal.

"But he has *nothing* to cook with that I can see!" said Amy, still looking puzzled.

"A spoon I using and three chatties!" once more put in the Mahometan.

"I really *can't* understand *how* he manages, and the dinners are so nicely served," said Amy, again turning to me.

"There are many things we can't understand in the East, and we must be content to remain in ignorance." So I replied as we walked back again under the covered way.

All through the evening those terrible shocks continued, and as night came on the Compline Psalms seemed to have a special meaning:—

*"Whoso dwelleth under the defence of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."*

*"I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope, and my stronghold: my God, in Him will I trust. . . Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night: nor for the arrow that flieth by day."*

## CHAPTER XI

## SORROWFUL PARTINGS

**A**T this time I received information about a little girl who was to be placed under our care. The transactions were carried on through a lawyer much respected by the English community in Rangoon.

The mother was a heathen Burmese woman ; the child was also a heathen when she first came to us.

We were asked to provide her outfit, chiefly consisting of soft white dresses suitable for the climate, with a little pale blue, the colour of our school—Purity and Truth—which carried out our motto:—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

I was called out of the class-room one morning, and found three figures on the verandah—Maung Shway Món, the lawyer's clerk ; Ma Mee, the Burmese mother ; and the child. My heart went out at once to the sad little girl as she clung nervously to her parent.

The figures formed a picturesque group, and I stopped for a moment to admire the green and pink shades of the silk lungis—the pretty white muslin jackets—the background of luxuriant foliage—and the blaze of sunlight beyond.

The mother seemed terribly touched at the idea of parting with her child. I asked Maung Shway Món to explain to her that she could come to see her little child from time to time.

"Not Christian child," he said to me in broken English, "heathen child."

"But she will be baptized very soon we hope," I replied.

"What name giving?" asked Maung Shway Món.

"Agnes," was my answer. "I will show the child her new clothes now ; let the mother come too."

Maung Shway Món again explained in Burmese,



and the two followed me up-stairs. All the garments had been spread out to the best advantage, and in a moment Agnes was interested.

What a pretty child she was, quite Italian in appearance, with beautiful intelligent dark eyes; dark hair cut in the usual Burmese style—a deep fringe in front and a coil of hair on the top of her head, with a natural flower artistically fastened in; an olive complexion, and cheeks flushed with excitement. Such pretty little hands she had too!

I looked from her to the mother, and was obliged to acknowledge to myself that she was far from beautiful. Ah! poor Ma Mee, she was a heathen, but she had a mother's heart, and parting with her child was a sore grief to her. She watched me take off the Burmese clothes and dress her child like a European, and then there came into her face an expression of pride and satisfaction which lasted but for a moment.

Whilst Agnes was still admiring her new grandeur, Ma Mee stepped out of sight, down the staircase, and was gone! But her last look of sorrowful farewell haunted me for many days.

And poor little Agnes—she was only five years old when she came to us—how did she bear the separation? For three days she pleaded and pleaded with clasped hands to be taken to her home. It was terrible to see such grief, and to listen to her sobs, but I knew such distress could not last long, and a few days later she was comparatively a happy child; able to take an interest in her toys, and to chatter to Ayah in Burmese.

Then followed her baptism at the Cathedral—a day she never forgot, and one of the deepest interest to us.

\* \* \* \* \*

Amy and Geraldine had gone out for the evening; and I was walking in the compound trying to read by the dim light of a new moon, when a pony trotted up, and the rider exclaimed—

“I thought I should find you alone, Sister, at this time.”

I recognized at once the voice of the speaker; it was the lawyer who thus addressed me.

"The child's mother is dead," he said, lowering his voice. "I've brought the telegram for you to see—here it is."

I took it from his hand and read the words:—"Ma Mee died of fever to-day, will burn to-morrow."

I shuddered as I returned the paper. Poor Ma Mee! and poor little Agnes!

"It is best so," said the lawyer; "break the news to the child when you think fit. I'm quite delighted with the improvement in the little girl. The other day I was riding past here, and I saw her playing about quite happily, and looking so well cared for. But I must not detain you any longer. Good-night, Sister." And the pony trotted out of the garden.

Would the child in after years grow up to be a teacher and a missionary amongst her own people? We hoped so; it was for that purpose she was to receive a good education, and already she showed signs of much intelligence. Who could predict the far-reaching influence for good this one child might have in Burma?

We spoke to her before long of her mother's death, and Agnes looked up and smiled. "What did death mean?" She did not even wait for a reply, but ran off to her play. Her present happiness occupied her mind, and she was too young to take in more.

By this time we had made room for another little girl, ten years of age. She was a child with a strong character, and would have, we could see, a great influence for good or the reverse over her companions. Maudie had been, during her short life, in most of the schools in Burma, and we hoped, now that she had been placed under our care, she would settle down at least for a few years. She was quite different in appearance to little Agnes, she possessed a quantity of auburn hair, and her complexion was fair. Her chief characteristic was certainly her temper, which, when she first came to us, often gained the mastery over her. But with her temper she

possessed a most affectionate disposition. Amongst the children who later on shared our home with us, none loved the Oratory more than little Maudie. She learned to say the Psalms by heart, and was always most devout.

Geraldine was very fond of this child, and often took her for a drive to the Royal Lakes, in a little carriage which a friend lent, and Maudie would come back radiant with happiness. She was also a great favourite amongst the children; and she had one *best* friend, whose young brother was going to England to be an Admiral! I do not remember any intermediate stage being mentioned; his promotion, in fact, was to correspond with the growth of plants in the tropics.

Sometimes when Maudie wished to be unusually interesting, she would relate, with evident satisfaction to herself, some of the horrors which had been enacted by the Dacoits in Upper Burma, of which she had heard when quite a child.

But one day Maudie's head was drooping, and I watched her with anxious eyes. She had lived for some months at Akyab, a very unhealthy station, and had contracted malarious fever, which every now and then re-appeared.

"I don't feel at all well, Sister," she said; "may I go to bed?"

I touched her hands; they were burning; and her head was burning too.

"Yes, dear, go at once, and I will ask Dr. Marie Côté to come to see you."

Maudie dragged herself up-stairs—and did not come down again for several weeks. Dr. Marie Côté was a Canadian M.D., a very clever and kind doctor who lived close to us. My difficulties in connection with the children's ailments would have been much greater if we had not had such a valuable neighbour. She most generously gave a lecture upon hygiene once a week to our elder girls.

Maudie was very ill that night; quite unconscious, *for the fever ran high*; for many days and nights she

had to be carefully nursed. As the fever left her, and strength returned, she would talk to me in her weak little voice.

"I don't mind being ill," she said one day, to my great surprise.

"What a funny thing to say, Maudie ; I thought you liked running about and driving to the Lakes, and——"

"Yes, so I do," she said, interrupting me ; "but it's lovely in this little room ; it's part of your room, isn't it, Sister ? I can't remember being carried in here—please let me stay till I'm quite well."

"Yes, you shall, dear child," I said, bending down to kiss the upturned face.

"I think my temper has gone," continued the child ; "I dreamt last night that it had been dropped into the Irrawady river."

"You have been a very good little patient, and very obedient," I said, encouragingly.

And Maudie smiled a very wan smile at the well-earned words of praise.

Let me record here what happened three years later.

Most of the children had gone to their different homes for their hot-weather holidays ; a few still remained behind, including Maudie. I could see how anxious the child became, as day after day passed and nobody arrived to take her to her home at Minbu. She was far too young to undertake such a long journey alone.

But when her patience was almost exhausted, she came running to me with a flush of excitement upon her face.

"Oh ! Sister, grannie has come to fetch me ; may I go with her this afternoon ?"

There was but one answer to such a request, and during the next few hours Maudie was busily engaged packing up her treasures. Her grannie, Ma Soh, was a Burmese woman and a heathen, but I did not fear any evil consequences from the companionship, for more than once Maudie had proved herself strong

in the Faith, and she was looking forward to her Confirmation the following year.

That afternoon, when she came to say good-bye, remains clear and distinct in my memory. She looked quite a picture standing in the verandah, in the glow of the setting sun, with her auburn hair like a golden halo round her well-formed head. How pretty she had grown! I felt a dull pain of approaching sorrow as I drew her towards me.

"Maudie, remember what you have learnt here, and always say your prayers—we may not meet again."

She turned away, for tears had started to her eyes, and she could not bear to let me see them. In a moment more she had controlled herself and bent down to kiss me—and thus we said farewell for ever here on earth.

A few more days passed, and I knew she must have arrived at Minbu. No letter could reach me for some time; but one early morning, when I had just returned from the Cathedral, a telegram was put into my hand. I opened it hastily, and these words met my eyes—

"Darling Maudie died yesterday of cholera."

Was it possible that the child was dead! I felt stunned for a time, and sat down to think how best I could break the news to our happy little family. Sounds of joyous merriment came to me from the garden. The children would be broken-hearted, so fond were they of their young companion. And Amy, she must be the first to read the painful message. I took it across to the school-house, where I knew she would be found, and we grieved together over our loss.

I tried, as weeks went on, to gain some details of Maudie's last hours. Yes, she had suffered terribly—so the cousin told me who had nursed her; at one time she had clasped her hands as if in prayer, but no words could be distinguished. Her mother was thought to be also in a dying state at the same time, so Maudie had died and had been laid in her last resting-place before the mother knew of her child's *illness*.

## CHAPTER XII

## PROGRESS AND SUCCESS

**I** THINK you told me, Sister, a few days ago that you wanted another house in this locality, and hoped to find one soon. Well, we have taken our passage home in the *Staffordshire*, and shall be leaving Rangoon the middle of next month. Would you like to write to our landlord and offer to take the house off our hands? It is just like this one, but perhaps not quite so well built."

The speaker was our friend who lived just opposite St. John's College. We could get to her house by passing through our compound, and of course the position was very convenient. She and her husband had been amongst our kindest friends, and often, before my loneliness was relieved by the arrival of Amy and Geraldine, the kind Commissioner's wife would call to cheer me after the children had gone to their homes in the evening.

"Yes," I replied, "it is quite true we want another house badly. Of course the rent will be nearly as heavy as what we are paying for this one—and there is not only the rent to think of, but the furniture; we have not much money in hand that we could spare for such a purpose."

"Oh! my husband and I have thought about that already," exclaimed my generous visitor. "It will be a great kindness if you will take care of ours whilst we are away, which will be for a good many months. That will give you time to look round, and you can buy what you want by degrees."

"How good of you to make such a suggestion! Of course you will pack up all your pretty ornaments and just leave us the useful furniture—more than that would be too great a responsibility."

"Will you think over our suggestion and let us have your decision to-morrow evening? That poor

young widow whose husband was shot by the Dacoits a few weeks ago is staying with us until her ship sails. I should like you to see her and her little child."

This matter of great importance was discussed with Amy and Geraldine, and we came to the conclusion that we could not possibly refuse such an offer, and that it would certainly be best to secure the house at once.

"It's present name, Victor House, is far from attractive," remarked Geraldine. "I wish we could think of something different."

"Would you like Mandalay House better?" I asked.

"That would be charming," exclaimed Amy.

We never regretted the exchange of names except on one or two occasions, when our English mail letters were despatched to Mandalay in Upper Burma, and were thus delayed many days.

The following evening I went to the Commissioner's house, and found his wife and the young widow on the verandah. The latter looked very pathetic in her deep mourning, and seemed glad to talk about her husband, whose life had been so cruelly taken.

"They would not have killed him if I had been there," she said to me, with a flush of excitement rising to her pale face. "The Dacoits waited until they knew he had exhausted his ammunition, and then they came down to the river-side and shot him in his boat—such cowards they were—and he was so brave to the end, and stood fearlessly up to meet his death! I would have looked after the ammunition if I had been there with him, and he should *not* have died. But he could not take me up the river on that last fatal expedition."

Her little son was going to England to be educated, she told me as I bid her farewell—poor young widow.

"I am so glad that everything has been so easily arranged," said our kind friend, as she walked back again with me to Arracan House. "I am sure your *work will extend and prosper.*"

"A second house, without the generous help of Miss Lennox and Miss Moore, would have been impossible. They are the greatest comfort to me; the work here would have been so much more lonely and trying had they not joined me. We were entire strangers to each other, so it is wonderful how smoothly everything has worked."

"Don't forget, Sister, our appointment to-morrow morning, because there is so much to arrange. If all goes well the money will be useful for the furniture, will it not?"

I had promised to meet some of our friends at the Assembly Rooms to discuss with them the final arrangements in connection with a Sale of Work, which was to be held for our benefit. I will not here describe the building which was known by that grand name; it would not inspire my readers with admiration. Happily the erection has been replaced by the handsome Jubilee Hall, which was formally opened some time before I left Rangoon.

We were deep in conversation when I saw a Syce, who had entered the building with haste, go down on his knees by his master's side and point excitedly to something in the distance which had attracted his attention. The Commissioner glanced in the direction indicated.

"There is a big fire," he said, turning to his wife; "it is close to our house, and to yours too, Sister. I think we had better be off at once, and you must come with us."

A dense black volume was rising into the clear morning air, and we could even see the flames darting up into the sky; but the actual locality of the fire was still uncertain.

The pretty Burmese ponies trotted off briskly, and we had not gone far when we met a number of Indian soldiers, who had been hastily summoned; in fact they had had no time to don their uniforms, but wore simply their picturesque white flowing clothes. How their naked swords gleamed and flashed in the bright sunlight!



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"I think the prison is on fire, and the soldiers have been ordered out to prevent any of the prisoners escaping," said the Commissioner, as we came within sight of the high walls.

On we drove until we reached the broad open road skirting the jail, and then we were stopped by the soldiers and questioned as to our destination. After a short explanation the ponies galloped onward, and in a few minutes we had reached Arracan House; there I alighted and found the household in a state of excitement.

Kind Dr. Marks was in the compound assuring Amy and Geraldine that there was nothing to fear. He was very proud that morning, for his Burmese boys had been the first to hear the signal of alarm, and had promptly dashed down the road with their fire-engine, and had been the principal means of extinguishing the disastrous conflagration. I say disastrous, because in a short time the whole store of rice, which should have fed the prisoners for some months, had perished in the flames.

The next morning a most interesting spectacle was to be seen outside the big prison gates. Groups of merchants in gay attire had assembled, bringing with them samples of rice, and each merchant hoped, of course, to be the successful competitor.

There was a grand investigation as to the cause of the fire. It was traced to two unhappy Burmans who, against the rules, had been smoking near the rice go-downs. Of course they were punished; such an offence with such grave results could not be passed over.

We used to feel sick at heart when we saw those poor prisoners chained together in gangs. We knew they were kindly treated, but for a Burman to lose his liberty is to him far worse than losing his life.

I was haunted for some days by the face of a man who had been conveyed to the jail in the prison van. I could not forget the utter look of terror as he *stepped towards* the great gates through which he

was to pass, and in passing leave behind his liberty ; he would far rather have gone to his execution.

When we prayed, as we did at Compline, for all prisoners and captives, our minds turned instinctively to the huge impassable walls not far from us, which hid from view more than two thousand unhappy inhabitants of the Golden Land.

I well remember the last evening the Commissioner and his wife spent at Mandalay House. We went across our compound in the evening to bid them farewell, and found them in a glow of happiness. Even the sedate Judge, high up in Government service, was excited. Were they not going *home* to see the children from whom they had been separated two long years? There was an electricity of affection which made the parents feel that these children in far-off Ireland were counting the days to the re-union.

A true wife and a true mother our friend had been ; high-minded and deeply religious, like so many of the women it was my privilege to meet in Burma.

As I write these words I know that in this world we shall never meet again, for the sun rises and sets over a newly-made grave, thousands of miles away from her home and her children.

On the Bishop's return from England he found us settled in our second house. I was invalided at the time, and not able to go to the school-house for several weeks. Dr. Marie Côté was, as usual, kindness itself, and probably without her clever treatment I should have returned to my native land with one foot only.

The Bishop gave Amy and Geraldine a most warm welcome to his diocese. He had never met them before.

I must admit that I enjoyed those quiet days at Mandalay House, for the removal had been a fatiguing undertaking, and had caused my illness.

From our verandah I could watch the Burmese

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boys, who belonged to St. John's College, playing football, a game of which they never appeared to grow tired ; but more than this, I could hear them singing in their pretty chapel those beautiful words:—

“The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended,  
The darkness falls at Thy behest ;  
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,  
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.  
We thank Thee that Thy Church unsleeping,  
While earth rolls onward into light,  
Through all the world her watch is keeping,  
And rests not now by day or night.  
As o'er each continent and island  
The dawn leads on another day,  
The voice of prayer is never silent,  
Nor dies the strain of praise away.  
The sun that bids us rest is waking  
Our brethren 'neath the Western sky,  
And hour by hour fresh lips are making  
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.  
So be it, Lord ; Thy Throne shall never,  
Like earth's proud empires, pass away ;  
Thy Kingdom stands and grows for ever,  
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.”

Soon after our arrival at Mandalay House Dr. Marks had, most kindly, a direct path re-opened for us which had not been used since the days of Bishop Titcombe, and we were thus saved a circuitous route from our house to the College Chapel.

The date for our first Government inspection was approaching. Every detail in connection with those important days had to be carefully thought out and arranged for.

Antony was quite flattered when I explained that the Inspector would be left under his care during the tiffin hour.

“I am sure you will have everything very nicely arranged,” I said, and Antony assured me all would be as I could wish, so I left him to his own devices. *It is best not to attempt to direct native servants too*

much. But I shall never forget my feelings when, having occasion to fetch something during the early part of the morning, I saw displayed upon the dining-room table extremely pretty silver dishes, expensive glass, and elegant china.

"Where, 'Boy,' *did* you get all these things from? What *will* the Inspector think? We are only poor Sisters, and ought not to have such things in the house!"

'Boy' evidently thought otherwise.

"I getting all silver and glass from there," he replied with a majestic wave of the hand, which pointed in no direction and left me in complete ignorance. But after a few more questions he condescended to reveal to me that a certain mem-sahib had gone to the Hills. What connection there was between the hills and the silver was quite a mystery, and I gazed with wonderment at the table and then at 'Boy.'

"Mem-sahib gone to Hills in India—her 'Boy' lending all these things," he explained at last.

It was too late to upset Antony by giving him a good scolding; but I felt obliged to explain to the Inspector the origin of that costly table at which he sat down to tiffin.

Afterwards I learned that 'Boy' showed him with feelings of pride *our* chapel.

"Does the Bishop come here?" asked the Inspector.

"Only Sister saying prayers here," was 'Boy's' inaccurate reply, because I think he might have added the children to the members of the congregation.

The end of our first year's work was a delightful report, which may be read this day in the annals of the Diocesan High School, and of which we all felt justly proud.

## CHAPTER XIII

## UP THE RIVER TO HENZADA

“**T**HE heat is really unbearable,” sighed poor Geraldine one evening in April. This was her first experience of our three hot months, and, that year, Rangoon had been more than usually oppressive; in fact there was a wave of heat which had reached us from India.

“I wish the rains would come,” said Amy, who was looking already far more delicate than I liked. “The air will surely be cooler then. But just imagine, we shall have to get accustomed to an almost constant downpour for six months. Our friends are always trying to comfort us by saying that everything will be covered with mildew; that the furniture will fall to pieces; that our books will be ruined, and our clothes too. Such a happy prospect! I am quite sure my people at home will quite envy my residence in the East when I send such delightful and inspiring details. I have just found an extract that I want you to listen to. It is from a charming book called *A New Way round the World*, and runs thus:—‘Were we to take up our residence in these islands’ (referring to the islands off Rangoon), ‘we should find snakes, scorpions, centipedes, lizards, and all sorts of vermin making themselves free with our premises. The deadly cobra would wriggle into our bedrooms without asking leave; spiders, with legs three inches long, bodies the size of a small cup, would spin webs over our windows or look down upon us with hungry eyes from the corners of the room. Swarms of flying ants would come into the dining-room at dinner-time and alight upon our food; white ants would bore the table-legs, gnaw away the pillars of the house, or carry off our clothes in a single night. How nice to have a great spider creeping over your face, cockroaches as large as mice skipping across the dinner-table!

If these seem to be exaggerations, go into a Museum of Natural History and there see what company the people of the tropics are compelled to put up with. These are the "spice islands"—of nutmeg, clove, and cinnamon—fanned by balmy breezes, laved by gentle waves—lands that have enchanted us in poesy. But there is another side of the picture. The mercury is 93° in the shade, the atmosphere steamy and sticky. We feel like doing nothing, but would give anything for a cool place to do it in. The breeze, so balmy over the poetic page, is hot and penetrating; we would like to carry out the idea of Sidney Smith, and take off our flesh and sit in our bones!"

The concluding sentence was received with a peal of laughter.

"Truly enchanting! I am going to send that home in my next letter," put in Geraldine, "because I'm a shocking letter-writer, and always find it so difficult to fill four sheets a week, and my relations are not satisfied with less. But really, Sister, don't you think it would do us all good—including the three little girls who are with us for the holidays—to go for a few days up the river?—it surely would be cooler than here."

"And perhaps be shipwrecked upon one of these islands, and make personal acquaintance with the creatures you have just read about."

"Oh! I'm *sure* we shan't be shipwrecked, at least I shan't be," said Amy in her usual cheerful way. "What may happen to you all I really don't know—but I have a *presentiment*."

"Amy, do go on and not keep us in suspense—what kind of a presentiment?" entreated Geraldine.

"Well, I think it is very kind of me to prepare you and Sister for the worst—and thus save a shock," continued Amy, trying her best to look serious. "I have a presentiment—that—I—shall—be—killed—by—a Chinaman."

"Well, you say it in a very cool, deliberate way," remarked Geraldine, without moving a feature. "I

don't believe anything of the kind. Of course if you make a Chinaman angry on purpose you must suffer. Don't you remember during the voyage out you were always telling me that you would never see the places again? Gibraltar—Malta—Port Said and Aden, I mean. But you do not look at all miserable with such an end in view!"

"Oh! you don't believe I can see," smilingly replied Amy, "so I shan't refer to the subject again, unless I should feel depressed, which isn't often."

"But really, Sister, don't you think we might go up the river for a few days?" urged Geraldine. "It would be such fun, and do us all good before we settle down to hard work again."

"The expedition would cost a few rupees," I remarked, "and we have not much in the bank. I went there this morning, and the pass-book was handed to me by one of the Burmese clerks. He had the usual pink silk handkerchief tied round his head, and a spotless white muslin jacket; he certainly looked very attractive, and so did the inside of the pass-book. I gave quite a gasp of delight when I saw Rs.3000 placed to our credit, but alas! the pleasure was only momentary. There was evidently a mistake, and I handed the book back to the Burman with a request that the matter might be looked into. I watched him turning over one massive ledger after another, and then he consulted a secretary, who looked as if life in such heat had become a burden. The two conversed together, and in a few minutes the book was handed back to me. In that short space of time we had been reduced to a state of poverty, and I was informed that our sole riches consisted of a meagre Rs.50! I did not in the least mind informing the young Burman that he had again made a mistake; I knew that calculations were to him mere playwork. Finally, I left the bank after a trying half-hour with the happy knowledge that the Burman had added a nought to that miserable Rs.50, and we had therefore Rs.500 to draw upon."

"I should have felt so angry," remarked Geraldine.

"But don't you think that the expedition up the river is possible?"

"Yes, dear, we must go; the change will do you all good. To-morrow morning I will tell you what I have been able to arrange. I have an idea upon the subject; but now it is time to go to Chapel and then to rest."

Early the following day I wrote to the Irrawady Flotilla Company asking if free passes up the river could kindly be granted us; but I did not feel at all sure what the reply would be.

Geraldine and Amy looked more than astonished when I made this announcement next day.

"How splendid!" exclaimed the latter, who was always full of life and energy. "I do wonder what kind of an answer you will get."

Afterwards as circumstances developed themselves, Geraldine often spoke of that visit up the river, and said how strange it was that she should spend the first weeks of her married life at Henzada. But I am anticipating events which did not happen for some time afterwards.

Towards the evening a reply came to my letter. The paper upon which it was written was very large and very important, with the flag of the Company flying gaily at the top. The secretary had much pleasure in sending six passes gratis, but politely informed me that we should have to pay for all provisions supplied on board; also that the same request could not be granted the following year.

When the news became known there were great rejoicings. The servants were also much excited for more reasons than one—they too were looking forward to a little holiday.

'Boy' assured me that Malee would always be on guard night and day, a statement I much doubted. But it was of no use to get uneasy. A bungalow *is* a bungalow, and must under some circumstances take care of itself. Faithful old Ayah came and whispered to me—



"I taking care of Sister's house—I always here," and that was reassuring.

We were taking our coffee by five o'clock the next morning. Oh! I shall never forget the airlessness and steamy atmosphere of that day; we simply gasped for breath, and longed to be away on the water.

There was a grand farewell on the part of the servants; they could not have done or said more if we had been starting for England. Even the Dhobie (washerman) was there salaaming down to the ground, and wishing us a pleasant voyage.

The steamer we found waiting for us down by the river-side; only a small boat, but the accommodation was good, and the Captain very pleasant.

There is not much to record about the next few days until we came to our moorings off Henzada, which we reached on Saturday afternoon, having left Rangoon the previous Wednesday.

My chief recollection is of a broad river—a flat country stretching right and left—the rank tall grass coming down to the water's edge. Every now and then a Burmese village nestled in the jungle came in sight; but no town of consequence appeared until Henzada was reached.

"I advise you all to land," said the kind Captain when we found ourselves moored under a bank; "the ship will get 'red hot' by mid-day to-morrow, and you couldn't possibly remain on board. There is a Rest House, or, as it is more usually called, the Circuit House, not far off. The natives know it well, for it is near the Court where their cases are tried. It will be a pleasant walk now that the sun is setting; come back and tell me when you have arranged matters."

"What shall we do about food?" asked Amy, as usual most practical.

"Oh! that will be all right," cheerfully responded the Captain; "my servant shall pack you a basket of provisions in the early morning."

So we started in search of the House.



RIVER MAIL STEAMERS.

*To face p. 86.*



"It sounds so official," remarked Geraldine, "and may be occupied by Government people when we get there."

Our way lay through the bazaars, which were swarming with men, women, and children who turned to gaze at us with curiosity—they did not often see English people. Presently we came to a more open road and purer air; and standing by itself, some distance off, in a large green compound with shady trees, was the Rest House—such a pleasant name for hot, weary travellers.

A Durwan (watchman) was in charge. I approached him with some misgivings, and asked if he could show us the rules of the House.

"Nearly everybody has permission to take up their abode here, if only for a few nights—except ourselves," remarked Amy, scanning the printed paper with an amused look upon her face. "Listen to the list:—All Government officials—Commissioners—Officers—Police Superintendents—Heads of the Forest Department—Doctors—and Chaplains. We couldn't by any means call ourselves Government officials even in these days of female advancement. When I get an opportunity, I shall recommend the Chief Commissioner to insert a clause to the effect that Sisters and ladies who have come from England to benefit the country are eligible."

"Now, Amy, *do* try to be serious," urged Geraldine, who was fearful that a Sunday on board the "red-hot" steamer was in store for us. "I am sure we *could* get permission to stay if we could only find the right person—the house is quite empty now—come and let us look round."

We followed, the children included. The large, cool rooms certainly did look most inviting—and especially the verandah.

"We would say Matins here to-morrow, if we could only get leave to remain, and the children could have their usual Religious Instruction; it would be such a pleasant Sunday. Come, let us see what we can do to further our plans," and I led the way down the

steep staircase out into the compound. The rays of the setting sun were fast disappearing, and I began to fear that our exploit would be a failure, but I kept *this* to myself.

We were considering what our next step should be when Amy exclaimed—

"There is an Englishman coming down the road towards us, he will tell us what to do ; people are so kind to each other out here."

"I shall be delighted to help you in any way I can," said the stranger, who, we afterwards discovered, was acting for the Commissioner during his absence. Our party evidently interested our newly-found friend, and he cast more than one inquiry towards Geraldine and Amy, who, however, remained quite undisturbed. I explained our position in a few words.

"I would advise you," he said, "to hurry back to the steamer, for it will soon be dark. I will go on to the Circuit House and order everything to be ready for your party early to-morrow morning."

After many grateful thanks we parted. The sun had set, and the moon had not risen ; the bazaars through which we passed were lighted up with lurid torches or small flickering lamps. The natives were still to be seen in crowds, laughing and shouting at the top of their voices.

At last we found ourselves by the river-side, and stepped on board quite worn out with the long walk. The deck was in darkness. Why ? We trod upon, we sat upon, we leant against, a swarm of flying ants ; their wings lay strewn in every direction ; they covered the table at which the Captain had dined in haste and in semi-darkness. The meal had been brought to a hasty conclusion and the lamp extinguished, for more wings had become visible than refreshments.

"This is a beautiful illustration of that thrilling extract which I read you the night we formed the plan of coming up the river," remarked Amy, as she saw *poor Geraldine's* look of horror.

"Really it is too dreadful; I hope we shall soon be asleep and forget all about these wingless creatures."

"Oh! no, we shall meet them in our cabins too," responded Amy, who was determined to make the most of the occasion.

And so we did.

"You see now what companions *we* in the tropics have to put up with!" were Amy's last words that night.

## CHAPTER XIV

### IMPORTANT EVENTS

**T**HE next morning, whilst the air was still cool and the tall palm-trees cast their long shadows across our path, we arrived at the Circuit House.

"This is delightful!" exclaimed Geraldine, "I am sure we shall have a pleasant day. How good of our nameless friend to arrange all for us; but that is just like English people in the East, they never seem to think they can do enough for travellers."

Our thoughtful friend called during the morning, so we afterwards heard, and made many inquiries about our comfort from the Durwan, but did not venture to intrude himself upon us.

We said Matins; and the children had some religious instruction; then I chose a quiet, shady corner on the verandah.

The merry voices of the children rose and fell as they played in the space under the bungalow, safe from the fierce rays of the sun.

We were all sorry that no Chaplain happened just then to be at Henzada. Still the hours passed quickly, and as the evening drew on we had a quiet, happy walk away from the town, and talked of the dear ones far away in England.

On our return, Geraldine, who had been the first to reach the bungalow with the children, met me on the staircase with a large imposing book in her hands,

"Sister, the Durwan has just told me that all visitors enter their names here, and write some remarks. You will be dreadfully puzzled what to put down, because, as we have said before, we are *not* Government Officials or anything of that sort. I will read you the last entry written by an ungrateful traveller—'I found the bungalow very dusty and untidy, and when I called the Durwan's attention to this, he promptly pulled his turban off and commenced to rub up the furniture with it.'"

"Quite the best thing he could do under the circumstances, only it was bad manners on his part to appear without his turban," remarked Amy, much amused. "I am sure *we* have been very comfortable."

There was a good deal of merriment over that book and its entries. At last, after much consideration, I wrote—

"We are most grateful for the kindness of an unknown friend who placed this Rest House at our disposal. The servants have been very attentive." And below we added our names.

None of us guessed what wonderful things would happen before Geraldine's eyes would rest again on those words. Had she any presentiment herself of coming events? I think not, although her sweet young face was more than usually thoughtful that evening.

By seven o'clock the next morning we were on board again, and thankful to see no traces of the flying ants. Soon Henzada was out of sight and we were steaming down the river to Rangoon.

The afternoon of our last day on board had arrived, and I was feeling anxious, for there were heavy, dark clouds overhead, and the air was still and oppressive. This was the time of year when a storm might be expected, for the breaking of the monsoon was close at hand. For several hours I hoped for the best; but about five o'clock a sudden darkness came on. There was a roar and a rush and the wind swept past us with terrific fury.

The Captain ordered, at once, our three anchors to

be cast, to prevent the steamer being swept out of her course on to the bank of the river.

I shall never forget the vivid lightning—the awful noise of the wind as it tore the canvas awning into pieces—the deafening peals of thunder—and the whirlpool which rushed past the ship. How brave Amy and Geraldine and the children were through it all !

“If we should drag our anchors and get ashore, we could at least take refuge *there*,” said one of the passengers, pointing towards the land.

I peered through the darkness and shuddered, for there was nothing to be seen but the tall, damp grass, and the jungle beyond, and I pictured to myself noisome creatures lurking about ; everything that was dreadful seemed to be near us that evening.

My chief thoughts were for Amy and Geraldine—how could they possibly bear any exposure ? Then our children would suffer most probably from the effects of the storm, and they belonged to the country. But there was nothing to be done ; we could only wait patiently for the tempest to abate.

Once the Captain passed me with a look of awe upon his face ; and, later on, he told me that a flash of lightning had almost touched him.

How thankful I was when the wind commenced to sink, and the water ceased to rush past our ship, and light came again.

“I have been praying all the time,” whispered Maudie, as she nestled close to me on the deck in a sheltered spot. “Was it not dreadful ? I thought every moment something would happen. I shall be so glad when we are all at home again—shan’t you, Sister ?”

I stroked the little hand that clasped mine, and told her how good she had been.

Early the following afternoon we found ourselves back safely at Arracan House, with a group of rejoicing servants round us ; and in spite of the storm we all agreed that the expedition had been a very happy one.



That was the last time Amy, Geraldine, and I travelled together in Burma.

What happened during the next few weeks was so unexpected that it was difficult to follow events. At last it dawned upon me that we should soon lose Geraldine.

At first there was a sense of intense pain at the thought of the approaching separation, but when that had passed away I could rejoice, I am thankful to say, over her new-found joy. Yes, it seemed almost impossible that such an important event could happen so soon. Geraldine was engaged to be married!

Of course the consent of her parents had first to be obtained, and this caused some delay, but before the rains were over she became Mrs. Arthur Gresham.

Our buildings were full of children, so the wedding took place from a friend's house. It was a very quiet ceremony at the Cathedral, followed at Geraldine's special request by a Celebration of the Holy Communion; and thus her new life was commenced. She and her husband drove from the Cathedral to Mandalay House, and I had the pleasure of seeing her in her pretty white travelling dress.

Later on she wrote from Henzada and told me how happy she had been during the few months spent with us.

For weeks and weeks after she left us Amy and I felt a sad void, for we had learnt to love our dear Geraldine.

And what would Amy do? That was the question I often asked myself. She guessed, I think, what was passing in my mind, and although she said little upon the subject of her future life, her whole bearing seemed to reassure me. I dreaded, perhaps with want of faith, losing her companionship. Not that we saw very much of each other, our lives were too busy for that, and often we did not meet for a quiet talk until after our children had gone to rest. But whenever a difficulty arose I felt she was at hand to consult; she *had* a great power of discernment and true judgment.

In fact from this time I watched with the deepest interest the gracious unfolding of a noble character. That joyous disposition, which enabled her to rise above the daily trials of life, was still hers, but with it there had come a development of power hitherto latent.

"People will not believe that my heart is in my work," she said to me one evening with much earnestness, "but, Sister, I mean to stay here as long as you stay, and when you go home I shall go home with you."

The rain had been descending in torrents for hours ; just for a time there was a break in the heavy clouds and the sun's fierce rays were making themselves felt. The change was pleasant after the incessant splash ! splash ! splash ! of the Rangoon deluge.

Coming down the road I heard a rumbling sound as of heavy wheels ; for some time nothing could be seen, but presently a tropical garden of palm-trees seemed to be approaching in one, two, three bullock-carts ; they were quite close now to our gates. The first driver consulted some written instructions and then advanced. To my surprise the three carts were driven into our compound, and the patient bullocks, such splendid creatures they were, came to a stand-still. The head-man with a profound salaam stepped forward and handed me a card, on which was written—

"For the Sister's garden, with kind regards." The handwriting was unknown to me, and I could but look with amazement from the patient bullocks, and the waving palms beyond.

Conversation was impossible, for I did not know the man's language. It is often a good thing one *has* to be silent in the East. All I could do was to send for Malee and make him understand, more by gesticulations than by words, that the palms were for us and should be planted as soon as possible. Malee was splendid at emergency work.

Whilst I was watching the carts being unloaded, the welcome tapal-wallah arrived and produced from his leather bag a registered letter, which contained a cheque for Rs.150 from the Judicial Commissioner for

Upper Burma. That was really an exciting afternoon, and presently, whilst Malee was working steadily on, I took up my white umbrella and walked across to the school-house in search of Amy.

"Well, Sister," she exclaimed, as soon as she saw me approaching, "you do look thoughtful. What has happened?"

"My dear Amy," was my reply, "we have suddenly become rich."

"Not really! Shall we be able to build soon? or buy any of the one hundred and one things that we want so badly? I really do think people would believe more in our poverty if we had nothing pretty about us; or if we had school under a tree, regardless of sun-stroke; or during the rains under an umbrella."

"You really must be serious," I said, laughing, in spite of trying to look solemn. "We have become rich—but rich in *palm-trees*."

"I saw some bullock-carts go by a long time ago, and made up my mind that they were on their way to Government House."

"No, they came to us instead."

"Who sent them?" asked Amy. "Perhaps there is some mistake."

"I don't think so; here is the card which the driver brought with him."

Amy took it from me, and I saw her change colour.

"Do you know the handwriting, dear? it is not familiar to me."

"Yes," she replied; "I have seen it once or twice before."

"Then the palms are for you." And I looked anxiously at her, as she read the words again.

"Perhaps so, dear Sister; but it is only a kind action, for which you and I can both be grateful—is it not?"

I saw that she did not wish to continue the conversation, so after a few minutes' silence I mentioned the money which had reached me from Upper Burma *that same afternoon*.

"The Commissioner leaves the spending of the money entirely to us. I am sure it should be used for something in connection with our High School in memory of his wife, who took such a deep interest in this work. She looked so strong—did she not?—when last she came to see us; it is difficult to believe that her days of unselfish devotion to duty are over. What do you think of a Copleston Memorial Medal for the girl who does best in the Upper School?"

"I am sure everybody would like that; but what will each medal cost, do you think?"

"About ten rupees; Orr of Madras will execute any design we may send him with excellent taste. We shall have sufficient medals to last fifteen years."

"I am sure we could not think of a better plan. May I tell my friends at the Manse all about this? I am sure they will be interested. I am to dine there this evening, you know, and after dinner we are going to a concert in the town which has been got up for some charitable purpose."

In the evening, as we waited for the carriage from the Manse to call for Amy, she imparted to me the startling information that she had a "presentiment."

"About what?" I asked.

"Oh! I don't know exactly, Sister, but still I *have* a presentiment."

"So you told us, dear, a long time ago," I said, laughing, "when we were arranging our expedition to Henzada, but nothing has come of it yet. You said then that a Chinaman would end your days. To tell you the truth, I would infinitely prefer meeting a Burman with a dhá than encounter an angry Celestial with his blank, expressionless face."

The next morning when we met at breakfast Amy told me that the presentiment had come true.

"But the Chinaman has not killed you, for here you are alive," I exclaimed.

"No, the Chinaman did not come, but the concert-room collapsed instead."

"Well, I am thankful," I rejoined, "that you can make so light of your misfortunes."

"I must tell you, Sister, all about what happened. But I will say, before I begin, that the concert was a great success. We had just got half-way through the programme when there was a sudden and extraordinary movement in the centre of the room. The ground, of course, has got very damp after all the rain, and a pile of wood unexpectedly sunk, and the floor with it, and the audience too. Two very brave men sat in front of me and my friends; directly the first word of alarm was heard, one of them cried 'fire!' and jumped from the verandah into the street below—I do hope he was not hurt; the second one rose, turned very pale, and sat down again. My friends rushed out of the room through the first available door."

"And you too, I hope, dear."


"Oh! no," said Amy calmly, "I came to the conclusion that it was far the best plan to sit still, and so I did until the panic was over."

"Surely the concert was stopped at once," I exclaimed, feeling very proud of Amy's courage.

"No, certainly not. The piano was dragged across the road into another house, and the musical evening continued as if nothing had happened. That is the reason why I said that the concert was a *great success*."

## CHAPTER XV

### MIDNIGHT VISITORS

"H! Sister, it was so dreadful—the Burman has been at last!"

"What is amiss?" I exclaimed. "Sit down and tell me what *has* happened."

Poor Amy had the appearance that morning of one who had been startled by some terrible apparition. She was trembling with nervous excitement and was as white as a sheet.

"We have so often talked about thieves that I can scarcely realize now one has actually paid us a visit.

The clock must just have struck twelve when I was awakened by a curious noise. I opened my eyes and looked round, but could see nothing."

"You always keep a lamp burning all night, don't you?" I asked, looking at Amy with anxiety.

"Oh! yes, always, Sister; and in a few minutes, by the light of the lamp, I saw—I saw—a figure coming round the screen which divides my part of the room from Christine's. My first thought was to scream. Then some of the dreadful stories about Burmans and their dhás rushed through my mind, and I recollected what the doctor told us about that poor missionary who was stabbed at Kemmendine, because the man thought he was going to be caught. And then I remembered the attack upon Miss Williams at Shewbo. So I determined to lie still and see what the figure did. He was evidently a Burman, although the cloth which he had drawn over his head concealed his face. I was thankful for one thing, Christine slept on—the sounds had not disturbed her. She had always said that if a thief did get into our rooms she hoped she would sleep through it all. Oh! that dreadful figure! It crept round the furniture, opened every drawer, searched in every corner, and once came quite near to me to discover, no doubt, if I was asleep or not. Through my half-open eyes I watched him with a beating heart, and a sickening sense of fear. I did not feel one bit brave; I only longed for the figure to take all my possessions and to go. It seemed like an hour, but couldn't have been more than twenty minutes, when at last to my intense relief he turned and passed the screen and was again in Christine's room; there he remained for some time, opening her wardrobe and turning her things over in search, no doubt, of money; he must have been dreadfully disappointed not to find any. Presently there was a sound of a door being closed and of retreating footsteps down the staircase—a soft thud—thud—thud—and then perfect quiet. I listened and listened again. At last he was gone!"

"My poor child," I said, taking her cold hand,

"you have passed through a terrible time. Why didn't you come to me at once?"

"I hadn't the heart to disturb you in the middle of the night. I knew how worn out you were with the day's work. And besides, nothing could be done. The man had gone off and will never be seen again."

"And what did Christine do when you awoke her?"

"She was quite terrified, and only understood a part of what I was telling her. Then we scrambled down the back verandah staircase, and called up the Malees. Of course that took some time, for they were slumbering profoundly. And when they did appear I could not help laughing. They had armed themselves with a stout bamboo and a ghastly sort of carving-knife. I am sure they would not have followed us into the house had they not been assured by Christine, who could speak their language, that the thief had *gone*. However, they advanced with caution, and examined, lantern in hand, every possible and impossible corner. Later on I saw them contemplating with curiosity the door by which the Burman had entered, and when, to their delight, they discovered the bit of string, with a knob of red sealing-wax at the end, which the man had used to lift the bolt, they were as proud, if not prouder, than if they had actually caught our midnight visitor."

"And what did the thief go off with?"

"All my little trinkets, and a handsome Indian shawl; and, Sister, what I valued most of all; I know you will smile when I tell you. Can you guess?"

I looked at her for a moment.

"Your spectacles?"

"Yes;" and Amy, in spite of what she had gone through, had a good laugh. "I'm never going to buy another pair."

And she kept her resolution. But although she lost none of her cheerfulness, she did not recover for many months from the shock received that night. Often I urged her to change her room and come over

to Mandalay House, but she always begged to remain where she was.

"I should not like the teachers and children to think that I am a coward," she used to argue. "In time I shall forget what has happened."

"You don't look rested in the morning, dear," I said, looking anxiously at her.

"Well, just now I always wake up at the same hour that the Burman came into my room. But the nervous fear will soon pass off."

I could not say more. But one evening a further revelation was made. For some reason, which I do not remember now, I had occasion to speak to Amy after she had gone to her room for the night, so I went across to the school-house to find her.

"Amy, I want to give you a message; may I come in for a moment?"

"Yes, Sister; but I am afraid you will be amused at what you will see."

She hesitated and then threw the door open. I entered and took the nearest seat, and simply shook with merriment.

"My dear child," I said, "I have never seen such a funny erection in my life before."

"That is just the corner where the Burman crept round the screen," explained Amy.

There was first a box; then a table; then a chair on the top of that; then came a towel rail; then a small table; and, last of all, a cup and saucer and teaspoon.

"Why, if that came down, a dynamite explosion would be nothing to it."

"I think it is a splendid idea," said Amy, contemplating the barricade with intense satisfaction. "You see, Sister, if anybody should try to get round that corner again, the effect would be grand. I put the things up every night."

"Every night! Why, I should be far too exhausted to go through such exertions. But the cup and saucer and spoon amuse me most. Well, I hope that Christine will keep at a prudent distance."



Of course I promised not to talk about what I had seen, and I kept my promise until we had placed eight thousand miles between that erection and ourselves.

It had become, however, quite clear that for Amy's sake we must have a night watchman, although he would cost Rs.12 a month. So without saying anything I asked Antony to make inquiries and bring us a trustworthy man. Before many hours had passed he introduced to my notice a Hindoo who could salaam most profoundly, if he could do nothing else. His *chits* were satisfactory; I think they really belonged to him, and that, like Sam, he was too respectable to borrow them from a friend for the occasion.

When everything had been arranged, and Durwan had promised to commence his duties the following night, I told Amy what I had done.

"It is kind of you, Sister," she exclaimed. "But I *am* sorry about the expense. I think Christine too will be happier in her mind. I am afraid Durwan will have a cough, and that will be so irritating during the stillness of the night."

"He wouldn't be a Durwan unless he had one," I replied. "It is wonderful how they one and all cultivate such sepulchral sounds. I expect he will walk round Mandalay House once or twice during the night, but if he coughs much I shall tell him that all his energies are required for your habitation."

So Durwan came and we found him a very useful man. He slept, or was supposed to sleep, during the day, and was on duty all night. When I say *all* night I use the expression with reservation, because several times he was found sleeping peacefully on one of the long tiffin tables. Of course he always said he was wide awake; but it was useless to argue the point, as our command of the Hindoostani language was happily limited.

Late one evening he sent a message to me, by one of the servants, saying that he was troubled about three men who had taken up their position, evidently

for the night, on a little wooden bridge just outside our compound.

"Tell Durwan I will come directly," I replied, wondering what sort of natives I should find. Such a thing had never happened before, even the poorest seemed to have no difficulty in getting a shelter for the night, and here, according to Durwan's account, were three homeless creatures at our gate. Directly I appeared, Durwan picked up his lantern and led the way. I found the men looking most miserable and very unlike the lively Burmans. They were taking off bandages from their feet and legs. I watched them with curiosity for a few minutes; they had either, I came to the conclusion, been walking a great distance, or they were ill. It did not take long to decide which was the case.

"These men are lepers—are they not?" I said, turning to the Durwan.

"Ama, Ama," he answered in Hindoostani. Yes, yes, he knew quite well what was amiss before he sent for me. Would I not send them away? It was not safe to let such people remain.

But my heart went out to those three sufferers. The Great Healer of all diseases, whilst He was on earth, had touched a leper and had healed him. Could I bid these depart? drive them away into the darkness of the Rangoon streets as if they were pariah dogs?

They watched me standing there, and expected, I felt, some act of kindness from me.

"Let them stay," I said, turning to Durwan; "our children do not use this gateway, and at sunrise these men will be gone."

For a moment I saw a gleam of anger in Durwan's eyes. Had he not called me to dismiss them—these poor leprous creatures? And I had bid them remain. But he knew I should not change my mind, and moved moodily towards the house, muttering something between his teeth.

The matter did not end there; before we went to rest that night each leper was provided with a

meal. I shall never forget the look of unbounded gratitude as they received the food from our hands.

Some months after this occurred Government secured a large piece of land outside Rangoon, and there provided shelter and comfort for these poor creatures, and their companions in misery.

## CHAPTER XVI

### ANXIOUS DAYS

**F**IRE! A Fire! The words passed through the house like a shock of electricity. Yes, there certainly was a fire, and a big one too, that afternoon, early in the hot season when every dwelling was well dried up by the fierce rays of a fierce sun. Into a cloudless sky that dense volume of smoke rose higher and higher. Many, nay hundreds, of native homes were being reduced to ashes as the hungry tongues of fire leapt from one dwelling to another.

As we gazed at the conflagration, to our utter astonishment a second volume of smoke rose from an opposite direction. Breeze there was none; still and stifling was the air; and the din of human voices rose clear and distinct. People of every nationality rushed and hurried down the roads towards the spot—the centre of excitement.

Antony, when the first alarm had been given, had gone out to gather information, and now returned breathless. Yes, the fire was down in the native quarter far from us. There was no possibility of danger; but crowds of poor natives were, or would be soon, homeless. And still the two fires crept steadily towards each other, reducing acres of dwelling-houses to ashes.

Could nothing stop the ravages of that fiery enemy? *Apparently not*, for still the flames rose and blended *with the glories* of a magnificent sunset; the sky and

the land were in a glow which only died down as night suddenly fell upon us.

In the evening, when the whole of Rangoon seemed to be pouring its dense population into the locality of the fire, we drove to the scene of the disaster. On either side of the road heaps of ashes and nothing more were to be seen—a more desolate stretch of land could not be conceived. The poor creatures who had thus lost their homes in a few short hours were hastily gathering together any treasures they had been able to save, and were making their way to a place of safety for the night. I shall never forget the scared, despairing look which had fallen upon those homeless refugees.

The days which followed that first big fire were certainly anxious ones.

The plague was still at its height in Bombay; thousands of natives, and a few Europeans, had fallen a prey to the dire disease; it seemed to march onwards, leaving death and misery behind, in spite of everything that was done to arrest its progress.

And would Rangoon escape such a dreaded visitor? Some parts of the city were in a very unhealthy state, and the plague, if it came, would take an easy hold upon the natives living in those quarters. Everything was being done to render the approach of the disease less likely, and the most unsatisfactory parts of the city were being visited by those in authority. The members of the Municipality worked splendidly to save the injury to our commerce which would certainly be the result of the appearance of the plague in our midst.

But there was a growing sense of uneasiness, the very air seemed laden with strange rumours of revenge. And revenge for what? The question could not be answered even in the bazaars where the matter was openly discussed. It is easy to get a false idea into a native's mind, and more than difficult to eradicate it. That terrible fire—the smouldering acres of land—the homeless poor—were placed side by side with the plague precautions—at least in the

native mind, and yet they had positively no connection with each other. But it was useless to say so. The feeling of uneasiness was there, and was growing stronger every day. We could do nothing but wait on patiently until the rains should come and relieve the present anxiety.

One afternoon a Superintendent of police paid us a visit; his presence did not pass unnoticed by our servants, and they drew their own hasty conclusions.

"You have two houses, haven't you, Sister?" he asked.

"Yes, this one and the one you see in the adjoining compound; they are very conveniently situated, being so near each other."

"And how many Durwans have you?"

"Only one," I replied, "for the two houses; they are expensive people to keep."

"Is the man a Mahometan or a Hindoo?"

"A Hindoo, and very reliable. He has been with us some time, ever since a Burman paid us a midnight visit."

"Oh! well," rejoined the Superintendent, "you should get a second Durwan, for the present at least; a Mahometan would have been better, but it is too late now to make any change. Of course we have been served with a number of anonymous warnings lately, and this locality has been mentioned; but I think myself another part of the town is more likely to suffer." He bid me "good-afternoon," and passed out of the garden whilst another official-looking person approached from an opposite direction. And who could this be? We were having a good many excitements in one day.

The stranger introduced himself; he belonged to the Fire Insurance Office and would be glad if he might be allowed to look round. I could but assent graciously to this request, but made no inquiries as to the cause of his visit, feeling that I knew more already than was conducive to peace of mind.

But although no word escaped me as to what had passed that afternoon, in the dim twilight I met Ayah

carrying down the verandah staircase a box containing many treasures, which she had deposited with us for safety.

"Ayah," I asked, "why are you taking that away?"

She bent down, and in an ominous whisper said, "Sister's house burning to-night."

"Who says so?" But Ayah shook her head and would give me no information.

That night, after the dormitories were quiet, and the children were peacefully slumbering, I went round and placed at the head of each bed a warm frock which would be useful in case of an alarm.

The next morning we heard that a school in the town had been set on fire, but with no serious results. Possibly Ayah had got rather mixed in her information. However, we had to wait several weeks before it was considered judicious to dismiss our second Durwan.

"There are your wages, Ayah, now go and get your rice, and don't come back until the children come from school; you had a bad night with little May; the child is better, and I can nurse her whilst you are away."

Dear old Ayah! I had to say the words *very* slowly and *very* distinctly, and how much of the conversation she understood I never knew. She spoke Tamil, a language which I could not be expected to acquire, at least, in its lower form. There was something very amusing in the way she would deliver my messages—often just the opposite of what had been said, which caused endless complications. But she was faithful, and very good to the children, so we were learning to put up with the minor difficulties. Ayah took her wages with a very grateful "salaam" and went off, as I had bidden her, to take her rice, and to slumber in her little go-down in the compound.

During the past night she had slept on her mat in the little ones' dormitory, as May had fever. I had been with the child until past midnight, and then Ayah had taken my place.

Early in the afternoon I heard loud sounds of distress coming from the back verandah, and hastened

to see what could be amiss. There was Ayah crouching low upon the ground, swaying herself backwards and forwards, with tears streaming down her brown cheeks and choking with sobs.

"Ayah—Ayah," I said in alarm, "what *has* happened?" I was much distressed, for I had never seen her in such sorrow before. "Can't you tell me why you are crying?"

By her side, on the floor, lay a bunch of beautiful roses.

"Roses for Sisters' Chapel," she said, still sobbing.

Very gladly I took the flowers; they had been bought with part of Ayah's wages. But why was she crying so bitterly? Between her sobs she at last told me what had happened. Whilst she was away in the bazaar, choosing the flowers, a telegram had come for her, bringing the news that her big daughter in Madras had died of fever the day before.

"Oh! she was a good, good child," continued Ayah, as she recommenced the swaying movement so indicative of grief.

"But, Ayah, are you *quite* sure there is no mistake? Is this really your *own* child who is dead?"

Ayah was quite positive that no mistake had been made.

"Have you seen the telegram?" I asked.

"No, my husband taking it to Kemmendine, showing it to his brother."

Ah! here was some hope. I knew by experience how relationship, amongst orientals, is surrounded by a halo of uncertainty. Often "*my child*" is simply an adopted child of a deceased friend; and "*my brother*" a cousin of doubtful degree. In the East the poor take care of each other, and no workhouses are needed.

"Take my advice, Ayah, and don't cry, or you will have fever yourself to-morrow; go and see if you can find out anything more about that telegram." And she did what I suggested, and came back in an hour or so with a radiant face! Her daughter was still alive, but her cousin's wife had departed this life.

\* \* \* \* \*

And where was Geraldine at this time? She was very often in our thoughts, although our busy life prevented us seeing much of her.

After the birth of her little daughter, I spent some happy days with her in her pretty house in Rangoon, where she and her husband lived for many months. During that visit she told me that they thought of going home before the next hot weather set in. I could see how much she was looking forward to the time when she would be able to introduce little Marjorie to her grand-parents.

## CHAPTER XVII

### A SUNDAY IN RANGOON



SUNDAY morning in March. It is just seven o'clock, and the Cathedral bells are ringing.

Our children, who think this the happiest day in the week, are having their early coffee in the large refectory. They are all dressed in white, no other colour, besides the pale blue ribbons, being allowed on festal days.

All look bright and happy, from Flora, the eldest, aged sixteen, down to little May, who numbers only five years, and her small companion who rejoices in the pet name of "Buntie." They would be very much distressed if they were told that Church this morning was an impossibility. In the evening it will be different; some of the little ones will suggest staying at home with old Ayah, and they know quite well that the request will not be refused. But the elder girls would not think of being absent from Evensong.

Soon after seven they are ready to start; they have arranged themselves in procession, the younger children walking first. At the gate of the compound they will wait for "Sister," who always has a good supply of books to distribute, and also "pice" for the offertory. Flora and her companions have learnt to set aside part of their pocket-money for the Cathedral



services, but May knows that she cannot take care of money yet ; and Maud, who is six years of age, would send "annas" to the Dhubie on Monday, in her pocket, and never see them again.

This morning in particular they are all rather excited, for the results of the last Government examination were known last evening, and our children are particularly pleased with themselves. The elder girls are still in suspense, for they sit for their examination at a centre—which may be either the Rangoon College, St. John's College, or the Convent.

The examinations for the Middle School Government Scholarships are always late, and are held in the Rangoon College. These are very difficult to obtain, for only the best students in Burma, who have gained a certain percentage at the usual annual examinations, are permitted to sit.

Two of our girls, Gladys Hardinge and Blanche Cornelius, were successful competitors during my stay in Rangoon ; they were the first to gain scholarships from our High School. Merlyn Kingsley was another brilliant pupil, who, after distinguishing herself at the College, has now gone to Calcutta to commence her medical training.

On one occasion, when I was in charge of the girls' examination room at the College, the Inspector approached me with some papers in his hand. He did his utmost to look solemn, as befitted the occasion. Behind him, in the big hall, I could see the competitors earnestly engrossed in work ; the greater number being of course Burmans.

"I think, Sister, this boy must have lost his head—don't you?"

I took the offered papers, and glanced over them. The subject was English history. There was plenty of writing—plenty of work—but the *sense* existed *not* ! There had been no attempt to connect one sentence with another. The expressions were more wonderful than *Alice in Wonderland*.

This was the style of the composition, although of course I do not now remember the exact wording—

*"The King said, 'Cut off his head!' and they cut it off eight times; and he said, 'Do it again!' and they did it again, and the victim said, 'Now I will rejoice!'"*

And this sort of literature covered several pages. I think the boy must have been suffering from Akyab fever. However, he had left the hall after giving up his extraordinary production, so that I could not decide if he were in his right mind or not. But as I handed back the papers to the Inspector it was quite impossible to assume a grave countenance. Neither of us thought *that* boy would gain a scholarship.

But by this time we have reached the Cathedral. The Choral Celebration is beautifully rendered, and the singing is extremely true. There are difficulties in connection with the acoustic properties of the sacred building which have still to be overcome. The gifted organist is Mr. Misquith, a name well known also in Southern India; under his management the Cathedral choir is one of which we should feel proud in England.

Sunday after Sunday the sweet tones of the organ ring through the building, and find an echo in our hearts during the week. Mr. Misquith has a little son, whom we call by the name of "Beautiful." He once got under the swing in our compound, having escaped from the vigilance of his Ayah, and received an ugly cut across his face. I feared for a few moments that "Beautiful" would have no longer a right to that name, and went off to break the news of the accident to his parents, with a beating heart. They were happily both sensible and kind, and seeing my distress assured me that "boys must be boys, and get into trouble sometimes."

"Beautiful" went to England with his parents for the Jubilee, and looked more fascinating than ever on his return. I can see him now waving his little hand as he bid me farewell, just before sailing. I have no doubt that in course of time he will be a musician like his father. During Mr. Misquith's absence another organist was always most willing voluntarily to undertake the work. He was an engineer, an architect, and a lover of music; such a combination

on. And people are supposed to lead luxurious lives in the Far East.

The Choral Celebration with its beautiful praise is over, the last note fades away, and the children, who think the service all too long, and reverently leave the building. Each has offered some special petition—every one has tried her best to follow the prayers, and every one has had a share in the great work of intercession.

We walk slowly home; there is no need to hurry, and the sun is already getting low.

As we approach the verandah we come to a new scene; in fact a reception is about to take place. The children this morning have many visitors. Their Burmese relatives, who have arranged their journeys into Upper Burma for the holidays being now near at hand.

Reader, let me introduce you to Ma Ma. She is a very pretty, gentle Burmese lady, who, when taken a seat, rises with much grace and elegance in European style. She cannot talk English, but she understands much that is said.

English explains the details about the journey, and then with equal ease repeats what I have to say in Burmese to her mother. It is a pretty scene, for May stands out a contrast, in her white and blue, against the rich colouring of the costly silk brocade. She has been with us nearly a year, and at first found it dreadfully lonely at school. Who can wonder? Morning after morning the child would wake up and sob when she discovered she was not in her own home; and then I would go to her and carry her to my room, and comfort her. The new life was hard for such a young child, but it was best for her; the parents did not think it right to leave little May to the care of native servants, as she would have been at Yamethen. The mother has not come without a gift of fruit, and I am shown a large Japanese tray of fine custard-apples which I am begged to accept. May's relatives are most grateful for what has been done for their child, and very proud of her fine English.

Linda too has been invited to go "up country" with May, so that the newly-acquired language may not be forgotten. Linda is not of Burmese extraction, for she comes from Southern India—a graceful little girl of eleven, who has motherly ways of her own, and will be delighted to help to take care of May.

A little further off, but still under the shade of the verandah, Katie and Maud are deep in conversation with their young uncle from the Rangoon College. He is always quiet and respectful in manner, and speaks fairly good English in a soft undertone, as if afraid that the words he wants to use will fail him. Of course his lungi is the fashionable colour, pink, with green lines, and the "gaung baung" round his head is pink too, but a darker shade; he looks a studious Burman, as is natural, for he aspires, when his studies at College are over and he has well earned his F.A. degree, to gain some post of responsibility under Government. Katie, his little niece of nine years, is deeply engrossed in a discussion as to the necessity of making various purchases in the bazaar before she and her sister start for Minbu.

The child has inherited from her handsome Burmese mother a great aptitude for making a good bargain. I have watched her, after school hours, buying some gay-coloured ribbon which she considered absolutely necessary for her own and Maud's happiness, but she has spent, without the slightest impatience, more than half-an-hour in carrying out the transaction, and bringing the Bengalee box-wallah to a just course of dealing.

At last matters are settled with the young uncle, who has asked permission to call for the little girls the next morning and make the necessary purchases.

"Please, Sister," says a little voice, "Grannie has come to see me." It is Agnes who is standing by my side; "our" little Agnes—a child by adoption, and much petted by the other children. The long black lashes which fringe the expressive eyes are quite remarkable. Yes, certainly she is growing a more engaging child each day.

Agnes is rather nervous just now; the restless movements of her little hands indicate this. The fact is, whenever Grannie—a fine old Burmese woman—appears, Agnes thinks something dreadful is going to happen, and that she is about to be carried off to her Burmese relatives.

I am not myself quite sure of the intentions of the old lady, and consequently watch the proceedings at a judicious distance. Agnes is fairly happy if Flora is sent with her to mount guard, but she will be happier still when the interview is over and she has brought me, with many "salaams" from Grannie, an offering of large ripe plantains.

Poor Grannie! I feel sorry for her in many ways. One can see how she literally worships the child, but Agnes is not by any means as gracious as she should be. She stands at a distance and frowns down upon the old woman, who has to use all sorts of stratagems to coax the child to approach her. Perhaps Agnes remembers, in the past, that dreadful day when she was left at school by her broken-hearted mother; and

the going away *now* to live amongst strangers would be equally dreadful.

Grannie at a distance is giving Agnes instructions as to how she ought to treat those placed over her with the profoundest respect ; and Agnes frowns again, for she considers she knows perfectly well how to behave towards her superiors—and if she doesn't, she is quite sure Grannie knows less.

Then various questions are asked as to where Agnes is going to spend the holidays, and the child turns sharply to Flora and exclaims in English—

“ Don't tell—don't tell ! ” She is terribly afraid that the old woman will learn that she is going to Pegu, and Grannie's relatives live near there. She is going with Lucy, with the strict understanding, that she is never allowed out of doors alone.

At last, after what seems to Agnes an endless visit, Grannie raises herself from her squatting position and departs. But next time she comes to see her grandchild, Agnes most probably will not be one bit more friendly than on this Sunday morning.

As Grannie moves slowly away from the house, the breakfast-bell rings, for it is now past nine o'clock. The children enjoy their curry and rice as if the repast were quite a novelty, and yet for years this has been their daily meal. This morning the recent gifts of plantains and custard-apples are much enjoyed by all of us. During breakfast there is a constant chatter going on, but the elder girls are careful not to let the little ones get noisy, which would be considered a great breach of good manners.

None of them join in the Offices said in the Oratory on Sunday, as the services in the Cathedral and the afternoon instruction are considered sufficient. Our great aim has been to make the day a really happy one—a day to be looked forward to during the busy week.

Breakfast being over, the little ones play about on the verandah, or make pretty miniature gardens in secluded corners, of soft sand and the leaves of bright-coloured flowers.

"Oh! Sister, *do* come and see what we have done!" is a constant request.

The elder girls settle down to letter-writing. Mabel wishes to know if she may send a letter to her mother. This is only another way of asking if one of her companions may write one for her. Mabel is nine; she came to us some months ago, and did not then know her letters, her life hitherto had been spent in the jungle. Poor Mabel! At first she did not like at all coming to school. She was terribly listless, and took no interest in what went on around her. Sometimes as I looked at her face, which showed no signs of mental activity, I would remark to Flora—

"I wonder what Mabel is thinking about—don't you?"

"*Nothing*, Sister, I believe."

There was generally a tragic scene when Mabel's relatives came to see her—or rather when they bid her farewell. I found out then that if the child did not know her letters, she knew how to scream. But those attacks of despair became gradually less, and by the time we approached the hot-weather holidays there was a marked improvement.

In fact, a great awakening has come, and Mabel is quite an enthusiast in educational matters. The dull, heavy expression has passed away—she can smile and laugh now like the other children, and is often the first to offer her assistance on a busy day. It is evident she has made up her mind to gain an honourable position in the school, and we think in time she will succeed. Only yesterday, we had the pleasure of telling her brother that we believed she would become one of our cleverest pupils.

But spelling is still a great trouble to the child. Presently she brings her letter, written by her "best" friend, and exhibits it triumphantly to me. She has done her part, and signed her name, but as I glance at the signature I have to turn away to hide a smile, for I have read the word—"Mabble!"

As we are so soon to separate, I spend the morning, more or less, with the children. At twelve o'clock

a bell is rung, and we all settle down to a story-book.

On this Sunday everybody is very anxious to hear the end of *Sara Crewe*, a charming tale by Mrs. Hodgson Burnett. We all sympathize very much with the little heroine, who had lived in India ; and we are not ashamed to say that we shed a few tears over the sad life in England, which is her lot after her father's death ; but we enter quite as much into her joys, especially when the faithful Hindoo servant transforms her poor, cold little attic into a room fit for a fairy to inhabit.

There is quite a chorus of voices, " Oh ! Sister, don't stop ! " when ' Boy ' informs us that tiffin is ready. " *Please* finish the tale, this is our last Sunday before the holidays." So tiffin is just a few minutes late that day.

The thermometer stands only just below 100°. The wooden walls of the house are so burning that we can scarcely touch them. The leaves of the book which I hold in my hand begin to curl up ! This is the hottest part of the day, and I am quite prepared for a special request, which is only made when the dormitories up-stairs are almost unbearable. Linda is sent as a representative of the younger children.

" May we bring down our pillows, Sister, and rest here this afternoon ? " She knows that there is a law which rules that no child who has not been asleep can go to Evensong. Permission having been granted, down the verandah staircase come the little girls with a good deal of merriment, and they arrange themselves in two rows on the teak-wood floor of the play-room. Silence is now the order of the day, but each child has been provided with a picture-book.

Linda is soon deep in the study of her favourite subject, the history of Daniel. I watch the children from a distance ; one after another falls asleep, and I myself cannot resist the effects of the heavy atmosphere, . . . and I dream of a country lying far away in the West . . . of sweet singing in a beautiful



church . . . of little children whom I loved and cared for in years gone by. . . .

There is great stillness for half-an-hour. And then I am conscious of the sound of voices. Linda is speaking very earnestly, and May is listening with attention, trying her best to take in all that is being said.

"Your mother is coming for us to-morrow afternoon. All the morning Sister will be getting our things ready, and of course I shall help her." It is Linda who makes this remark. "We shall have a long journey in the train, but that will be very nice. Now, May, I want you to promise me *one* thing."

May opens her eyes very wide and says "Yes." She would not for a moment say anything else, for Linda is her guiding star.

"Well, you know," continued Linda with animation, "we have been taught a good deal about Daniel this term. Here is a picture of him in the lions' den."

"Yes," says May with still more wonderment, for she cannot see at present that lions have anything to do with going home.

"Daniel was brave long before he was put into that den for saying his prayers. From the very first, when he was taken a prisoner from his dear Jerusalem, he would not do like the heathens did. God tried him to see if he would be faithful. *We* may be asked to go up to the Pagoda to offer flowers and candles, but you know we mustn't, because you and I are Christians. Will *you* promise to be faithful, like Daniel?"

And little May, who has but partly understood Linda's wonderful speech, once more says "Yes," in her own solemn way.

The preparation bell soon rings, for there is a great deal of bathing to be done before dinner, which is at half-past four. The two Malees have been busy at the wells for some time, and the children will find a tub of clear cool water for each of them on the back verandah; they are very proud of their bathing costumes, and have a good deal of fun when they

find themselves transformed into rather substantial mermaids.

Old Ayah and Mary Ayah are there in attendance. The former sometimes finds her large family rather a trial, for unfortunately the idea of obedience when she commands is of very doubtful description.

Sunday school on the front verandah follows the children's dinner, and then we are ready to start for the Cathedral. Only May and Maud have asked to be allowed to remain at home, and Ayah will, we know, watch over them with a motherly eye.

"There will be a full moon to-night," remarks Milly, as she takes my hand. "May we have a little walk before we go to bed?" She knows that is one of our greatest pleasures in Rangoon.

Milly, our pet lamb as we often call her, is a gentle, delicate little girl of ten. Her father is very ill, and poor Milly cannot go home; so it is rather sad for her to listen to the happy chatter of the other children. Her mother tells me that she is already an earnest-minded little missionary, for last holidays Milly was overheard giving instructions upon the Christian Faith to a small heathen Burmese child.

Before the children go to rest we pass out of the compound to the open road beyond.

A moonlight evening in Rangoon, how can the beauty of it be described? We tread as if in fairy-land—the soft silver haze envelops every leaf and flower and tree—we appear as mysterious shadows in a mysterious atmosphere. Even the birds bestir themselves amongst the trees, believing that daylight must have dawned. We could read easily by this wonderful light. The very air seems rarefied, and our voices echo in the stillness, which is undisturbed by a passing breeze. Sharp shadows are around us, and silver-like pathways before us. Overhead there is a cloudless vault of blue haze studded with millions of stars.

As we gaze upon the exceeding beauty of the scene we exclaim, "Oh! God, how glorious art Thou in nature!"

## CHAPTER XVIII

## THE SHADOW OF DEATH

**A** CLOUD, a heavy cloud of sickness and death fell upon Rangoon before the hot season of 1897 was over. Even the servants said, "Much sickness coming," as they watched the unexpected fall of rain just at the time when the heat was most oppressive.

Often in that treacherous climate the strongest are ill but for a few hours. Now typhoid fever appeared, and those who were stricken made a brave fight for life, lasting sometimes many weeks. Up to this time enteric fever had been almost unknown. The Bishop himself had told me, when I first landed, that this much-dreaded visitor, which carries off the flower of our people in India, was a stranger in Rangoon. And now, for the first time, we were to feel the insidious power of this unseen enemy.

No doubt the unexpected fall of rain had something to do with the unhealthy state of the town and neighbourhood, but there must have been other grave causes, yet undiscovered, which led to such disastrous consequences.

The shadow of death, I am thankful to say, passed over us and ours; but from the time that the outbreak first commenced, I had to watch with most jealous care the health of our big family. I knew that the neglect of the smallest detail in our household management might bring with it dire results. It was at this time that we literally "mounted guard" over our two valuable wells in the compound, which supplied us with pure drinking water. And, after the monsoon broke, we often stood over the Malees whilst they carried out our directions and dug little trenches for the rain to run off, for stagnant water meant fever.

The first Englishwoman to be stricken was fragile *Mrs. Pelham*. She had been living for several years

a life of self-sacrifice, and, in spite of extreme weakness, had faced with courage the difficulties and privations of travelling with her husband—a Government official—in the jungle. The camping out at night in tents, and the hot rides during the day, could but tell upon the strongest constitution. No wonder, then, that the fever claimed her as an early victim. From the first there was not much hope. She was most faithfully nursed, in the Chaplain's house, by her husband and a trained Karen girl from the hospital; but the fever increased and the weakness too.

One evening, three weeks later, I found poor Mr. Pelham pacing up and down the compound in restless anxiety.

"How is she?" I asked; but I read the answer in his face.

"The temperature is falling, but it is too late; the doctor has just told me that she is sinking fast."

"Can nothing be done?" I inquired.

"Absolutely nothing. It is so hard to say that, isn't it? She is unconscious now."

I left him with an aching heart, and, as I turned to look at the light in her room, I saw him standing with his hands clasped in an agony of grief.

Easter Day was drawing to a close when I noticed a Peon coming with haste across the compound; he handed me a *chit*. I knew the writing well; it was the Chaplain's.

"DEAR SISTER,

"Poor Mrs. Pelham has just passed away; we should be so grateful if you could come to us."

Amy, with a tearful face, undertook the charge of the children, and I started at once.

I found the native servants going sorrowfully about their work, for they had loved their gentle mem-sahib who had borne patiently with their trying oriental ways.

Presently the Chaplain went to say Evensong in the

Cathedral, and I remained to watch alone in that quiet room. In the distance, through the open venetian doors, I could see Mr. Pelham pacing slowly the verandah, bent with sorrow. I felt that he longed to talk to some one about his terrible grief, and so before long I joined him. He told me many things about his dear wife, too sacred to repeat here, and he dwelt much upon the perfect happiness of their married life.

"We never had a misunderstanding, and I never said a hasty word to her. I am indeed thankful for that *now*."

"And the children—are they still in Simla?" I asked.

"Yes, poor little people; but they are too young to realize what they have lost. Happily they are well cared for by their relations, and I must get leave of absence and see them as soon as I can. We received the Blessed Sacrament together early this morning, for I realized then that the end was not far off. Oh! what a blessed Easter Day this has been for her; but my God, what a sad one for me. Come with me, Sister, will you, whilst I take off her wedding-ring?"

We entered together the room where she was resting, as in a garden, so beautiful were the flowers and ferns which we had placed around her

"Dear child," he murmured, unconscious of my presence, "you have ever been good to me, and life will be sad and lonely without you. My darling little wife, good-bye;" he crossed the thin white hands again and bent down and kissed her, then passed out of the room on to the verandah, where the glow of the setting sun could be seen between the palm-trees, and the evening songs of the birds filled the air. All spoke of going to *rest*. But the morning would come, and he would awaken to a day of fresh sorrow.

As the sun rose the following day she was laid in the English cemetery; and week after week from that time for many months some new grave on that hill-side was made ready for the mortal remains of

one of our little English community. Were they prepared for the great and solemn change?

Those who live in the East may be classed by stayers at home as thoughtless and irreligious, but experience does not go to prove this.

Even years spent in the jungle, far away from all spiritual privileges, have not been able to shake the faith of these exiles. They have been surrounded by heathens, in utter loneliness, and yet have been true to the religion of their childhood. Most probably they have striven to hide their goodness from the world, but the fact remains the same; the deep, solid piety of many an English man and woman in Burma would put to shame the want of religion of those who live in more favoured countries.

The younger and less experienced officials, upon first landing, may possibly think it rather grand to boast that they have never been inside a church since they left Cheltenham, Rugby, or Eton. In a few short years there will be a marked improvement in tone and religion, or a marked deterioration. There is no *vid media* in the East. People either become saints or sinners. And I thank God that it has been my privilege to meet and to know many of the former. They have lived noble lives of devotion to duty in a land which, at best, can but be a land of exile, doing their utmost to raise the moral tone of the Empire so recently added to the possessions of our illustrious Queen and Empress. Some of them will, after honourable service, return to end their days in their native country, but many rest already from their labours under a tropical sun.

"The officer you saw at Government House when you went there to call some time ago, has just gone into the General Hospital; he has typhoid fever too, and I hear his poor wife is distracted; they have only been married a few months." It was Amy who gave me this information some weeks after Mrs. Pelham's death. "When will all this sickness end? Do you know, Sister, there are six young widows

going home in the next steamer ; what a terribly sad voyage that will be."

"I do hope this poor officer will get well again," I replied. "I remember seeing him at Government House, he looked so strong then. He signed his name in the Visitors' Book just before I did."

"His wife scarcely leaves the Hospital. How full of sympathy the world is ! Actually two of her friends take it in turns to be upon the verandah to cheer her when she leaves the ward. No one is allowed to see the Major, as he is in such a critical state."

"Our dear little Military Nurse told me lately that she had no less than *seven* officers dangerously ill at one time of typhoid in India, and one evening, when she was dreadfully depressed at the thought of losing them all, she felt that the *whole world* was dying !"

"And I don't wonder," exclaimed Amy. "I think we begin to feel like that, too, in Rangoon."

For a few short days we hoped against hope, and then the end came. The stricken officer had been ill for many weeks before his removal to the General Hospital. The doctors saw, but too plainly, on his first arrival that there could be no recovery. Still, in that attractive, well-arranged building, with its staff of able medical men, nothing was spared in the anxiety to prolong his life.

I often thought as we passed the beautifully kept garden, with its flowers, ferns, and trees of tropical growth, that it was a fit emblem of the life which is to come.

"There everlasting spring abides,  
And never-withering flowers ;  
Death, like a narrow sea, divides  
That heavenly land from ours."

Words which we often sung in the adjoining Cathedral.

That Hospital garden was the only spot in Rangoon that did not lose its beauty after the rains ceased in the autumn.

*And when the end came, she—the poor young*

widow—to whom life hitherto had appeared so joyous, so free from sorrow, was quite unprepared. It was not possible, she argued, that he had really passed away—that he would never, no, never speak to her again. They had left England only a few months before; he at the call of duty, and she with the belief that years of happiness were in store for them; and this was the end of it all.

They tried to convince her that the brave spirit had fled, and seeing that their words did not reach her ears, dulled by mental suffering, they raised her gently and carried her to her friends outside the chamber of death.

"You shall see him again if you will go home now," whispered one of the doctors, himself overcome with emotion.

And presently the young officer was removed to the pretty bungalow where so many happy days had been spent; and then in the early morning, with muffled drums and military honours, he was laid in his last resting-place.

## CHAPTER XIX

### A FALSE ALARM

"**D**INNER at the same time as usual," I said to Antony one evening during the rains. "I am going to see a sick child, and may be late, do not wait for me."

Antony understood English so well that I never found it necessary to mutilate our language for his benefit. He had a charming little wife and several engaging children, who always received from some bright-coloured garments on Christmas Day. The under 'Boy,' or Chocara as he was called, was a clever, handsome Mahometan lad, capable of a great deal of work, but needing to be kept in order by the more sedate Antony. Chocara also spoke English remarkably well, and added to his stock of knowledge



Chinese, Burmese, Hindoostani, Tamil, and any other language he might hear in the bazaars in Rangoon.

When I returned from seeing the poor child I found my evening meal waiting for me, and Antony busily engaged with his last duties before starting for his house in the town.

Suddenly to my astonishment Chocara appeared, calling out in an excited way something which I did not understand.

"What *is* Chocara saying?" I asked, turning to one of the elder children.

"Sister," she gasped, "he says, mad dog—mad dog!"

There was no necessity for me to add—

"Run up-stairs as fast as you can," for in a moment of time everybody had disappeared; even the gharri-wallah who had brought me home, and was taking shelter for a few minutes from the rain, sharply drove his little carriage out of the compound to a more secure position in the open road.

If there was one thing we dreaded it was a mad dog, and here was one close at hand, ready to spring at us out of the darkness. There was no safety but in flight.

Up the verandah staircase had disappeared the elder girls, the resident teachers, and, I hoped, Amy also. My flock having gone, I could but follow with all possible haste, and, having reached the verandah, I closed—with a beating heart, but with outward composure—the trap-door.

"We are all here—we are all here," cried many voices from the inner rooms.

I looked into the little ones' dormitory and found it empty; they had been dragged out of their beds whilst half asleep by their thoughtful elder companions, who were now beginning to barricade the many doors leading into their rooms. The teachers had taken to their beds as a place of safety, and were hastily letting down their mosquito curtains.

A more ridiculous scene could not well be imagined; but we were all too frightened just then to laugh, or to see the comic side of the picture.

"Where is Miss Lennox?" I asked, with fear.

"Have any of you seen Miss Lennox?" asked Flora.

"No," came the answer, "we saw her last in the refectory."

"Oh! I do hope she is safe; how dreadful if she is down-stairs alone with the dog!" exclaimed Flora, with real terror in her voice.

There are some moments which we should not like to come over again in our lives, and this is certainly one of them.

Only one thing remained to be done. I must go in search of Amy whatever the consequences might be. Lifting again the trap-door, I stood and listened for a moment, but there was no sound.

"Amy, Amy, where are you?" I called.

An answer came from the store-room at the end of the refectory.

"I am here, Sister."

"Are you safe?"

"Yes, thank you, quite safe. I have a lamp. The door is locked, and I have put your portmanteau against it. Don't trouble about me; I am quite comfortable and hope you are too."

The words travelled easily through the open wood-work to where I was standing. I breathed more easily. Amy was safe, and so were the children. But what next should be done? We could not remain thus in a state of siege for an indefinite length of time. I opened one of the venetians overlooking the cook's quarters.

"Cook—mad dog gone?" I asked, fearing what the answer might be. Our cook was also a Mahometan, who had been to England nine times in steamers belonging to the British India Line. He was a clever servant, very clean and very punctual. And honest? We will not go too minutely into that question.

His answer was very reassuring.

"No mad dog, Sister, only Burman stealing Malee's clothes."

Of course the children, who were still engaged in

their prison-like arrangements, heard the reply, and there was a loud and merry peal of laughter. The mosquito curtains were put up again, the barricades were removed, the little ones returned thankfully to their cots, and Amy emerged from the store-room. I descended to the refectory, trying to look as solemn as I could. Chocara had gone home for the night; flight, he thought, was best on such an occasion, but Antony was still in attendance.

"If Chocara had told me that six Burmans were coming with their dhás, I would not have left the table; but for a mad dog there are many excuses." So I informed 'Boy' as I finished my meal.

Antony approached me very solemnly one morning after breakfast; he had evidently something upon his mind that he was anxious to impart to me.

"Malee asking if he may have twenty friends to rice to-night," he said.

"No, 'Boy,' certainly *not*," I replied with decision; "you know such things generally end in a quarrel, and people must not quarrel in Sister's compound."

Antony went off with an air of satisfaction; he was, or rather he considered himself to be, a *very* superior servant. Had he not told Malee that his request would be refused?

In the evening I was busy with some Government returns which were obliged to be sent in the next day. Durwan had locked up the lower part of the house, and I had taken my writing to the upper front verandah. From the table where I sat rows of little beds with their sleeping occupants could be seen. All had grown very still; even the crows had settled down at last, after several disturbances, to a quiet night's rest.

But presently I became aware of the sound of voices. I listened. Yes, certainly some natives were engaged in eager conversation not far off. I passed through the dormitory on to the back verandah, and peered down into the darkness. Just below there was an unmistakable circle of dark figures, and in the centre a smouldering fire, on which, no doubt, the forbidden

meal had been cooked. Every moment the voices grew louder and more angry.

Such an act of disobedience must be suppressed. "Malee! Malee!" I called.

He well knew by the tone of my voice that I was not pleased. The Durwan had also been aroused by the noise, and I could see him advancing, lantern in hand. But, before he could reach that dusky circle, the guests swiftly and silently departed, and in a few minutes not a creature was to be seen, except Malee himself, who hastily retreated to his go-down, and quietly closed the door.

Once more silence reigned supreme, and after waiting a short time to see if the visitors returned to their midnight repast, I resumed my work on the verandah; and Durwan returned to his duties as watchman, and, possibly, to his slumbers.

Quarter of an hour passed, and then curiosity led me again to the spot from whence I could contemplate Malee's proceedings.

From behind the friendly shadows of the trees the figures were stealthily advancing, and, before my astonished eyes, the circle was re-formed and the repast proceeded with, but in solemn silence. My most dignified course of action was to remain quiet; but the next morning Malee received notice to leave at the end of the month. He had been so faithful ever since we commenced work in Burma that I was terribly sorry to punish him in this way, and, as the time approached for his departure, he looked so utterly miserable that I forgave his act of disobedience, and he remained with us until we sailed for England.

But that night's entertainment led to complications. I never understood how it all came about, in fact I did not make inquiries, it was best not to. One afternoon about two weeks later a native policeman appeared, with a wretched-looking object behind him. The "*object*" had drawn his muslin cloth over his head, and thus partly concealed his face and a deep cut. The policeman was very polite, and asked if he

might see our servants, as one of them was accused of having injured this man.

I did not like to follow to see what might happen. But before long, little May came running up to me with tears in her eyes.

"Oh! Sister, they have taken Malee to prison! Ayah says so; she saw them put irons on his hands, and he has gone!"

We all felt much disturbed in our minds when the news was confirmed. Antony went about his work with a very superior air. Did *he* ever get into trouble like this? And who was going to do Malee's work—who, indeed?

But the water was fetched as usual from the well that evening. For had not Malee a large number of friends always ready to do his work for him?

Early the next morning I commenced to wonder where he had spent the night, and if he would soon return to us.

Surely there was the familiar sound below my windows of leaves being swept up in the garden. I could not see the figure at work, but the sound was unmistakable. In a few more minutes I was in the compound, on my way to the Cathedral. Yes, there was Malee looking triumphant, as if nothing had happened to disturb his peace of mind.

He told me during the day that he would have to appear in Court to answer to a charge brought against him. I thought he was rather excited when, some hours afterwards, he asked me if I could give him ten rupees in exchange for a note. I fear much that he bought with that money some *very reliable* one rupee witnesses in the bazaar to support his case. But then Malee was a heathen and did not know better!

## CHAPTER XX

### NOT FAR FROM THE CHINESE FRONTIER

**F**OR some time there had been a rumour in Rangoon that Geraldine's little daughter had died during the voyage home. I tried my best to find out if there was any truth in this report, but failed to gain any satisfactory information.

Arthur Gresham was expected to return in a few weeks to Burma, and I awaited with much anxiety his arrival.

One morning when our children had just started for the School House, and their merry laughter could still be heard in the compound, a gharri drove up and Arthur Gresham's voice was heard upon the verandah.

"I have only just landed," he exclaimed, "and have come at once to see you. Geraldine sent you and Miss Lennox a number of kind messages which of course I have forgotten with the exception of one—she will bring Marjorie to see you directly they reach Rangoon, which won't be for several months."

"Then the report that the child has been ill is not true?" I said, with a great feeling of relief.

"I know what you mean, the rumour has reached me too. You can see for yourself how well she is looking," and he showed me with pride her photograph.

"Oh, I *am* glad! How pretty she is; and what a comfort she must be to Geraldine. Where are you going now?"

"Up to Mandalay, where I must find a house, and furnish it before Christmas. I am so thankful that we went home; we both felt we could not bear the heat any longer."

He lingered a little while, making inquiries as to the progress of our work, in which he still took the deepest interest. Then he drove away into the bright

sunshine with a look of satisfaction upon his usually grave face.

It was Christmas time, just a week before Geraldine was to leave England. A house inside the Fort at Mandalay had been taken, and furnished with much thought and care; and Arthur Gresham was counting the weeks to the arrival of his wife and child.

One sorrowful day a yellow telegram, with the word "urgent" in large black letters on the outside, was handed to him; it came, he saw at a glance, from England, and the news it contained was sad enough—"Marjorie is ill." And then a second message quickly followed, preparing him for the worst; and then a third, a few hours later—"Marjorie is at rest."

It was a terrible blow, which only those who have lost a first-born child can in any measure realize. And there could be no loving intercourse with poor Geraldine, for we were separated by thousands of miles. The child slept—it was well for her. But what could I do for the broken-hearted parents? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

The news reached me on Saturday, and by Sunday evening Arthur Gresham had arrived in Rangoon. I think just then Mandalay was unbearable. The mere movement of the train relieved his feelings, and besides, he was coming amongst friends.

Two months later Geraldine reached Rangoon; and after our children had gone to rest, and the house was quiet, she and her husband joined Amy and myself in the garden.

It was a glorious moonlight night, and the beauty of the scene around us had a soothing effect.

The touching resignation of the father and mother took me by surprise; there was no fierce fighting against God's Will. No, He knew what was best for the child; she formed a link in an unknown land of peace and joy; and they hoped to join her hereafter.

That was all dear Geraldine said, Amy told me

afterwards that she too was quite startled at the peacefulness of her voice and manner.

"Dear Sister," she said before we parted, "you and Amy will come and stay with us soon in Mandalay, will you not?"

I had not the heart to refuse such a request, and hoped, when the time should arrive when we could leave Rangoon for a few days, that the question of expense would be overcome.

"Geraldine wants us to spend Christmas with her," I said to Amy one afternoon in the middle of December; "she has asked us so often that I scarcely have the heart to refuse again."

"When did you hear from her?" inquired Amy.

"This morning, and and we ought to reply as soon as possible. I should not like to miss the beautiful services in the Cathedral on Christmas Day; should you, dear?"

"Oh! no, we could not leave Rangoon until the 27th at the earliest."

"I think we might be away until early the following week. We should just be back in time to receive our children before school re-opens. But there is still the difficulty of the expense to be got over. When we went to Henzada we had free passes; and now I think we might be equally fortunate if I were to send in an application to the railway company."

"Yes, I feel sure we should not have a refusal," said Amy eagerly, for she was very anxious to see Geraldine again and also Mandalay. "A good many children belonging to the railway officials are being educated in our school, perhaps that fact may have some weight."

"Will you write to Geraldine and tell her what we propose doing? And say, dear, that when everything has been settled I will write myself. It would be a great disappointment not to see her before we sail in March, and I am sure she will not come down to Rangoon for some time. See, here is her letter; she adds—'Bring plenty of warm rugs for the journey, you will find it very cold at night.'"



"It is warm enough now," exclaimed Amy ; " not much below 90°, I am sure, and in consequence I am feeling very limp !"

"You would not like to face another hot season, would you ?"

"I should not live through it," she said, with quiet earnestness ; and as I looked up at her, and saw the great change which had gradually taken place, I knew she spoke the truth.

I received a very gracious reply from the railway company, and two free passes. We were both delighted, and felt that our patience had been amply rewarded. How often had we wondered if we should ever be able to undertake that journey, and see King Theebau's palace, and the other wonderful sights of Mandalay.

We knew that Geraldine and her husband would do all they could to make our visit a happy one—and we, too, were looking forward to the pleasure of cheering her, for lately Mr. Gresham had been away in the jungle for weeks together. "I feel very lonely sometimes," so she had written ; "and I miss our little Marjorie very much—more, I think, as time goes on."

"It seems like a fairy tale come true," exclaimed Amy cheerfully in the midst of her packing. "I never really believed we should get to Mandalay, and here we are on the eve of starting !"

"Don't forget what Geraldine said about the cold nights, and take plenty of warm things ;" such were my instructions, but Amy could not realize the fact at all.

"We shall only be two nights in the train ; it does not seem worth while to take so much for such a short time," she argued.

So I quietly made my own preparations, and, first of all, I got Ayah to help me to put together an assortment of warm rugs, etc., for Amy's special benefit.

Soon after five o'clock in the evening there was a *grand* and almost affecting farewell upon the verandah.

We might have been saying a final good-bye to our dear resident teachers.

"Are we starting for Iceland?" asked Amy, laughing, as she contemplated 'Boy' packing the inside of the second gharri with our baggage, over which he was to mount guard. I was too much amused at the scene myself to say much.

This was the last journey we should take before sailing for England.

"Before sailing for England." I repeated the words to myself. Was it *possible*? Would they really come to pass?

At last we reached the station and found ourselves seated in a carriage all to ourselves.

"You will have dinner at Pegu at about eight o'clock," said the guard politely, "the message has been sent up the line."

"What time shall we reach Mandalay to-morrow?" asked Amy.

"At mid-day," was the reply. "I hope you will have a good journey and not too cold."

Amy smiled and looked at our baggage.

It was a very comfortable carriage in which we found ourselves. There were glass windows to keep off the rain, which, of course, never came; and venetians to keep out the sun, of which there was plenty; and ventilators all round the top to let in the air, of which there might have been more, at least on that afternoon. There was a door facing the engine which opened on to a small platform with a rail round it; and on the door a notice in English and a few oriental languages requesting ladies to bolt the door securely at night.

"How charming," exclaimed Amy; "why, I quite imagined we should leave our friends, the thieves, behind in Rangoon, and here we meet them once more in the train—they must find their employment very lucrative." The seats were arranged sideways, and formed very good kind of berths for the night.

We did not travel very quickly, nor very steadily, but we were quite satisfied and happy, for were we

not on our way to Mandalay? Neither was the scenery grand or interesting. There was a dull level country—arid from want of rain—stretching right and left, with here and there groups of bamboo huts forming small Burmese villages with paddy-fields beyond. But if we had been gazing at the loveliest scenery in Switzerland, or at the grandest views in Northern India, we could not have been more perfectly contented.

At eight o'clock, as the guard had said, we reached Pegu; darkness had come on, and we found our meal ready for us in a well-lighted room. We were the only English ladies who had travelled up that evening from Rangoon.

"Elephant or buffalo, do you think, Sister?" asked Amy, as she contemplated the contents of a plate just placed before her. I did not attempt to pass an opinion upon such a difficult question. There were plenty of other dishes, and, of course, the inevitable curry and rice, so we did not fare badly.

The train stopped about twenty minutes, and then we went on again into the darkness.

"It is getting *cooler*," remarked Amy, casting a glance at the rugs. "I am going to make myself comfortable and try and go to sleep."

"I brought some pillows for you; I knew they would be wanted; it is so miserable to rest one's head against a well-filled travelling bag."

"How thoughtful of you. At the last moment I remembered what you said and stuffed a jacket into my Gladstone. Here it is! I shall be quite warm now."

Another hour passed; it was ten o'clock, and still Amy was wide awake.

"It is cold," she said; and she rose and closed all the ventilators with a jerk, and put up the glass windows.

"That is your bundle of rugs, dear," I said at last, fearing she might catch a chill and be laid up with fever.

"Thank you, Sister," she said most gratefully, as

she unpacked the bright-coloured comfortable-looking wraps and drew them over her ; but she shivered as I gave the finishing touches and folded a thick warm shawl round her.

And still the train sped on, and still the temperature fell !

It was midnight, and Amy's voice was heard again.

"I think we must be getting near an iceberg."

"We are travelling, dear, in the tropics, and icebergs are not usually met in the jungle," I ventured to explain. "I think you must be dreaming."

"Oh! yes, I have been asleep at last—but I am still very cold! We look as if we were in the Polar regions!"

"I really don't suppose the thermometer is much below 70°!"

"I think it's below zero! I wish I had brought all my warm English clothing!" And Amy burst into a merry peal of laughter, in which, of course, I was obliged to join. "If our friends could only see us they would be interested, and perhaps puzzled at our appearance. I *am* thankful, Sister, that you took Geraldine's advice."

After that silence fell again upon us, and we slept until the sun rose with tropical splendour.

It was broad daylight when the train stopped and we alighted once more ; this time to partake of hot tea and toast, very acceptable after the trying journey. We did not pass unnoticed ; our appearance at the railway station evidently aroused much interest, and on returning to our carriage we found ourselves besieged by a group of inquiring strangers.

"Oh, Sister," earnestly asked one man, an Eurasian, "do you come from Rangoon? Have you seen my brother Vincent? He's at the Rangoon College, studying for his F. A. I heard the other day he had been ill."

I was obliged regretfully to acknowledge that I did not know Vincent ; the only College student I was acquainted with was Katie Wall's uncle. Vincent's

brother retired, crestfallen, to make room for somebody else. This time it was a handsome young Burman in the usual gay attire, but with the addition of a stout pair of shoes and warm knitted socks. Mouny Poo felt sure I must have seen his sister, so he told me in fairly good English. How was she getting on? Was she going to sit for the Calcutta Entrance Examination in March?

Before he could get an answer a Burmese woman, cigar in hand, edged her way up to the carriage in great haste, the train having shown signs of taking its departure, and commenced a fluent conversation in her native language.

"Amy, can you make out what she wants? It is evident I am expected to be fully acquainted with the Rangoon population in general."

But, before she could come to any satisfactory conclusion, the bell rang and the train moved off. There were a great many final exclamations.

"Sister, can you tell me . . . ?" "Have you heard if . . . ?" "I've a nephew in the Christian Brothers' School, is he . . . ?"

"I am quite sorry for the poor things. I *really* am. They are all dreadfully disappointed," and I sighed as we settled ourselves into opposite corners and opened our books to read.

At the next station a similar scene took place. The inquiries about absent uncles, aunts, nephews, and nieces were even more urgent, as the distance from Rangoon had increased. Perhaps "Sister" would never come that way again, and the best must be made of the present opportunity.

There was one question which I should liked to have answered, the eagerness of the upturned face was so touching—

"My son is in the General Hospital, laid up with fever; do you know how he's going on?"

"I was there early last week, when I went to visit a poor man who had met with an accident."

"Ah! my son wasn't taken ill till Saturday," and the *figure of the poor Eurasian mother* turned sadly away.

Once more the train moved on, and we sped away into the heat of the mid-day sun, and drew near to Mandalay.

The injured man to whom I referred was Benjamin, a Christian Tamil from Southern India, the Bishop's secretary, or "writer" as he was more frequently called. Poor fellow! his leg had been terribly injured, and he had been carried to the hospital, where for a week every effort was made to save the limb; but at the end of that time he had to choose between amputation and losing his life—of course he chose the former. As he gradually recovered his little private ward became quite an attraction, and he had many visitors. I think myself that, after the pain passed away, he had a very happy convalescence. But his hopes were centred on the Bishop's return from England.

"I'm sure his Lordship will bring me a false leg," Benjamin informed me one day; he spoke English fluently.

"But does the Lord Padre know the extent of the injury? It will be difficult to guess in London what you may want out here."

Benjamin, however, had evidently decided that no particulars were needed for the guidance of the Bishop—a leg was a leg. Poor Benjamin! he was doomed to disappointment.

## CHAPTER XXI

### THE ROYAL CITY OF MANDALAY

**W**HEN a new king ascended the Burmese throne it was the custom to remove from the old capital, and so it came to pass that in 1853 King Mindoon Min left the city of Amarapoora and took possession of the new site on which Mandalay now stands. Owing to the disturbed state of the country, it was necessary for the Palace to occupy a well-fortified position, and

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therefore a huge wall, which much resembles the Great Wall of China, was erected. It forms a complete square, each side being three-quarters of a mile long, and rises to the height of twenty feet; the base being nine feet thick, and the top three feet. A moat fifty feet wide surrounds the wall, and here the King's royal barge was kept.

Inside this fort resided the "Golden Foot," with his relations and ministers of State. Those who had no connection with the Court lived outside the wall in the native quarter.

Many changes had taken place when we visited Mandalay in 1898. The Royal Palace, where the gorgeous "gadaw day" had been held, was used by Government officials, and King Theebau was an exile in India. Instead of a cruel suspicious monarch, who ordered, at his own free will, the massacre of those he should have protected, English law reigned supreme in all its justice and purity, and the people of Upper Burma thankfully realized that there was but one administration both for the strong and the weak.

We found Geraldine and her husband looking very happy in their pretty house within the Fort.

"I am so glad," she said later in the day, "that you have been able to come up from Rangoon. The loss of our dear Marjorie comes back sometimes with almost overpowering sorrow when I am by myself; she would have been to me such a sweet companion."

That was the only time she referred to their bereavement. I could see that she made a great effort to be cheerful during those days that we spent with her. Her thoughts had been full of our visit, and she had arranged many little details which would add to our pleasure.

"I should like you and Amy to see the Palace this evening if you are not too tired; it is most interesting. My husband has his offices in one part of the building."

As we drove along the well-kept roads they seemed *very empty* after the crowds of natives we always met

in the streets of Rangoon. The houses were chiefly occupied by the military authorities, all the native buildings having been cleared away.

The Palace far exceeded our expectations, and we thought the throne-room truly magnificent. The ceiling was supported by enormous teak-wood pillars, covered with gold leaf and red paint. The throne looked rich in colouring, with its mosaics and sparkling ornaments.

In this imposing hall the late deeply lamented Duke of Clarence made his Communion on Christmas Day, 1889. That was indeed a changed scene, for in years gone by gaily-attired Burmans had there worshipped the "Golden Feet," and had remained prostrate for hours, not daring to move until the oriental despot had passed out of their presence. Had he not every reason to be proud and haughty, for was not the Palace in which he lived the "Centre of the Universe," and was not he the "Lord of the White Elephant" and also of the "Golden Umbrella"?

We had a great desire to see the Mission Priest who was working in the native quarter; such a visit would have been full of interest, but we received a note, the day after our arrival, saying that he was recovering from an attack of cholera and was extremely sorry not to be able to welcome us.

In the centre of the town King Mindoon Min had built a beautiful church, school, and clergy-house. Her Majesty Queen Victoria was so much interested in this generous act of the Buddhist monarch that she sent a chaste marble font which stands near the west door of the church.

The King entrusted nine of his sons to the care of the Rev. Dr. Marks for education, and fully permitted him to teach them the doctrines and precepts of Christianity.

In speaking of the past history of Mandalay we must not omit to mention the honoured name of the Rev. James Colbeck, who lived and laboured amongst the people of Burma for fifteen years. The Society



(S.P.G.) to which he belonged spoke thus of this courageous priest—

“No more faithful, earnest, and successful missionary has gone forth in this generation to carry the Gospel to the heathen, and the Church has lost a man who is a signal example of all that a missionary ought to be.”

The following extract gives a most interesting account of the escape of refugees from the Palace whose lives were saved by Mr. Colbeck.<sup>1</sup>

*September 18, 1878.*

“When I last wrote, I was expecting and watching for the arrival of refugee Princes escaping from an expected massacre ; we did not know whether the King was alive or dead, and expected to hear a wild outburst of confusion every moment. I stayed up till the next morning at three, and then turned in till six o'clock—nothing happened. Next day, according to secret information received, a ‘Lady of the Palace’ came dressed as a bazaar woman, and shortly after came about a dozen others ; they were more than I had bargained for, but I had to take them in and secrete them as well as possible. A few minutes after them came in a common coolie, as I thought. I got up and said, ‘Who are you?’ He said, ‘I am Prince Nyoung Yan, —save me.’ He was terribly agitated, had escaped from a house in which he was confined, and his uncle had been cut down—not killed—in opening a way for the Prince to escape. This made me a party of twelve,—the Prince and his wife, two daughters (princesses), one son (prince), foster mother and her daughter and attendants. Do not blame me for risking my own safety, for after all it is something to be an Englishman, and more to be a Priest. My house is even by Buddhists regarded as sacred, and not lightly to be disturbed. We knew search was being made for the fugitives, and so, as soon as dusk came, we dressed up our Prince Nyoung Yan as a Tamil servant, and as it fortunately came on to rain I smuggled him into the Residency Compound, right under the noses of the Burmese guard at the gate. He carried a lamp and held an umbrella over me, as it was raining, and I treated him

<sup>1</sup> Letters from Mandalay. By the late James Alfred Colbeck, S.P.G. Mission Priest, and Acting Chaplain to the Forces.

in character, *i. e.* spoke to him as a servant, etc., until the coast was clear. We did it capitally, and even cheated the Indian servants of the doctor into whose house we first went. Prince Nyoung Yan, alias Ramasawmy, did his part well, and we could afford to laugh at it were it not that he is still in some danger. He might be proclaimed king to-morrow, or, if one of his half-brothers was proclaimed, he would know that Upper Burma is no longer safe for him. . . . Next evening I went to dinner with the British Resident. This was a bona fide engagement; as it was dark, of course I needed a light, so one of the Prince's servants became my servant, and a sweet but sad little princess of ten years, dressed as a boy, followed me, carrying books for me. This is just in Burmese style. Priests get boys to carry books, etc. for them, so we got through the guard again; I thought they were going to stop us long before we got to the gate, but walked boldly on, and the guard cleared out of my way, so Princess Tay Tain Sat got in safely to her father. Shortly after I got home, at about eleven o'clock, two of the guard strolled into our compound with drawn swords. I heard their footsteps, but did not know who they were, so I challenged them, 'Who's there?'—Answer, 'Guard.'—'What do you want?'—Answer, 'Things are very unquiet, we have come to see that all is quiet here.'—I replied, 'Very good, the best place to watch is at the gate.' They went, and then I breathed freely again. I thought they must have got some idea of my little family. Next morning I sent Princess Tay Tain Gye to the Post Office, which is inside the Residency Compound, dressed up as a boy. One of my own Christian boys from Kemmendinge went with her, and brought back a note from Mr. Shaw, the British Resident, saying she had got in safely. The Postmaster came to breakfast with me, and as he was going back to office, I said he might as well take a boy with a box of books, etc. He said, 'All right,' and got safely in by another gate, also guarded. This 'boy,' dressed as such, was the foster sister of the Prince, and a brave little woman she was. It was she who had come first of all to prepare the way for the whole family. If she had been apprehended she would have been beaten to death very likely.

\* \* \* \* \*

"I have not time to tell how the rest got in, but at night I went again to dinner, and, needing a light, took the old

grandmother (*i. e.* Prince's mother-in-law) as my old man and lantern-bearer, and the little princelet followed me as a shadow. We were nearly discovered because my old man, though she looked very nice, was only an old woman after all, and had poor eyes. I stumbled over her and nearly tumbled on the top of three of the guard, who were sitting down by the side of the road. Perhaps this incident got us off, the light dazzled me and them too, and the old man mended his ways, so that at last we too got safely in. I can tell you I was very thankful when the last got into a place of safety, for the Burmese officers will not dare to take them out of the Residency by force.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Next day the old Dine Goung (the sergeant), in conversation with the headmaster, said he was afraid all was not right in the English phoongyee's house, and he wanted to search. 'You are quite at liberty to do so,' was the reply, for all the birds had flown. He did not come to do it. I got better sleep that night, six hours instead of three, and did not trouble my head to look narrowly at everybody that came near the gate."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Sister at Convent wanting to see you." So spoke Indianna, bending low on her knees, as I sat at my work on the verandah one early morning, three days after our arrival.

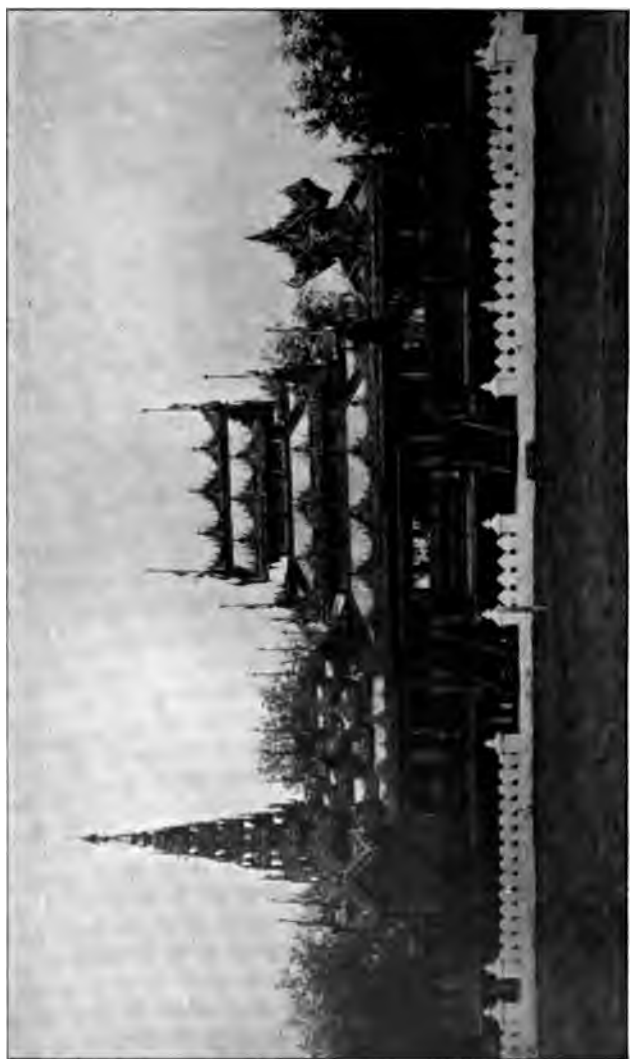
Dear Indianna! what a faithful Burmese girl she was. So gentle in her ways—always in the right place at the right moment; and when her duties were done, she would take her needle and sew for hours, on a bamboo mat, in a happy silent way, as if she needed no companionship. She had been brought up in the Convent, and was devoted to those who had sheltered her for so many years.

"Sister knowing your name in Rangoon, Sister wanting to see you," Indianna said again, finding that I made no answer, but only smiled down at the strange little figure before me.

"I liking to see your Sister very much, and Convent too. I giving you letter, and you bringing back answer when you done rice." So I replied in simple, unadorned, and not too grammatical English, but



KING'S MONASTERY, MANDALAY.



quite comprehensible to the Burmese mind. And Indianna was greatly delighted.

When I told Geraldine about this conversation she was much interested and arranged to drive me herself to the Convent, which she often visited and where she was always welcome.

Indianna considered herself a kind of ambassador, and was extremely gratified at the success of her mission.

So the following day Geraldine and I drove off to the Convent. It was a handsome "pucca" building, built, like the other Convents I have seen, for future generations. It stood off a noisy street, outside the Fort near the church. The chief drawback being the want of a large compound.

The Sister, Geraldine's special friend, gave us a hearty welcome, and talked in a simple, bright way which had a special charm and power of attraction.

"I know all about your school in Rangoon," she said as she chatted pleasantly on about things in general. "You have had some children who were under our care a few months ago—one we found very difficult to manage."

"We found her equally troublesome," I replied, quite amused to discover that we had such common interests.

"Ah! yes, you see we have difficulties both of us, have we not?" cheerfully remarked the Sister as if trials sat lightly upon her. "Come with me whilst Mrs. Gresham rests here, and I will show you the building."

It had grown dark, and the Sister took up a little lamp and led the way to the class-rooms.

"We are poor, and have to be very economical just now; the house has not been built very long; we shall be better off presently," she told me as we passed through one spacious room after another. No money had been spared to make them attractive; they were lofty and cool, and just suited for a climate like Mandalay. Up-stairs were large dormitories, with rows of pretty little beds with soft

falling mosquito curtains. All was bright and well kept. The Sister told me with evident satisfaction that a grand time of cleaning had just been passed through—the children being most of them away for the Christmas holidays. She was a lover of order, I could see that at a glance—a practical, sensible, lovable woman, who cared for all the children under that hospitable roof.

"Not long ago," she told me with much feeling, "a child of ours, who had been with us for years, was married in our chapel. We had been very anxious about her, as the mother, a heathen, claimed her when she had just finished her education, she had been cared for by us entirely until then; we could not allow her to leave us until she was under the lawful protection of her husband. How thankful we were to feel that she was in such good hands! Now I must show you our part of the house. We have a sick Sister waiting, oh, so patiently, for her release from suffering. She is our greatest comfort, for she prays for us whilst we work. This is the way," and I was led down a passage, at the end of which were the Sisters' rooms. Everything was simple and neat; but I could not give much attention to anything besides that fragile figure of the dying Sister. She rose from prayer as we entered, but she had no eyes for this world and what was passing around her, she was already on the border of the unseen land, and I felt we had been almost cruel to disturb her. She saw us, but her glance wandered back, almost at once, to the soft rays of the lamp, which could be seen in the adjoining chapel.

As we bid farewell to the kind Sister, and drove away, we saw that the garden was full of Burmese women and little children, who had just returned from their church.

It was a happy scene, and one which lingered in my memory for many days.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE ATTACK ON THE FORT AND FRIENDS AT PEGU

**D**URING this happy visit which was passing all too quickly, we drove in the cool of the evening to the King's kyoung, where we expected to find a monk of distinction, and so he proved to be ; he was certainly the finest Buddhist we had ever seen in the yellow robe. The scene which we unexpectedly came upon was extremely picturesque. The young monks had finished their studies for the day, and one by one they came to bid their powerful, handsome teacher farewell. With true oriental grace each one bent low on the ground in an attitude of deepest respect, then rose and silently passed out of the audience chamber.

The teacher gazed at us with evident interest ; he knew quite well that we had come from that far-famed country in the West, whose power he and his countrymen had felt for many years.

In an adjoining recess we found a young phongyee looking rather disconsolate and still bending over a sacred book deep in study. I wondered much if he were trying to learn by heart some of the sayings of the great Buddha whose religion had changed the course of his life from that of a free, lazy, happy Burman into a meditative, poor ascetic. Perhaps he had only assumed the yellow robe for a few months, or at the longest for a few years ; and possibly he might find the hard life so attractive that there would fade from his mind all idea of putting aside his distinctive attire and mingling again in the thoughtless gay life around him ; and in time he might die in the odour of sanctity, and, having been embalmed for several months, would pass through the purifying flames amidst the rejoicings of his brethren in religion.

We knew that no very deep learning troubled the



brains of the young scholars we had just seen. The Buddhist monks in their schools, which are found all over the country, do not even touch the borderland of mathematics, which study has a deep and powerful fascination over the oriental mind.

Having withdrawn from the presence of the head phonyee, we stood some time outside the kyoung and admired the beautiful carving of the graceful spires and peaks which rose tier above tier in every direction. The workmanship was most lavish; nothing had been spared to render beautiful this dwelling—an emblem, in the Burmese mind, of the dignity of those who had put aside all worldly ideas of prosperity and live for future and unknown glory. The building was supported on massive round logs, and was entered by several short flights of steps; the whole being surrounded by a low wall of white artistic masonry, which stood out well against the dark-brown teak-wood and the green foliage beyond.

From the King's kyoung we drove through the almost empty streets to the Arracan Pagoda. The light had begun to fade, and there was about this centre of devotion a heavy and oppressive solemnity which contrasted painfully with the scene which we had just witnessed. Up the steps we mounted, but it was too late to see the massive figure of Gautama twelve feet high, and deeply venerated by the Buddhist.

"I do not like the atmosphere of this place; there is something weird about it," I remarked to Amy, who was gazing at the groups of men and women about us. "This is where that wild monk only a few weeks ago planned with his misguided followers the attack upon the Fort."

"Oh! yes, I remember," replied Amy, as we hastily descended the steps. "They used to meet here week after week to arrange their plans for their senseless adventure."

All the details of that night, which might have proved so disastrous to the English living in the Fort, were fresh in my mind.

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This wild phongyee had assured his friends—about fifteen in number—that he was about to proclaim himself King of Mandalay! They took many weeks to bring their plans to fruition, and finally, on a certain feast day, when the streets were more crowded than usual, they marched, dhá in hand, from the Arracan Pagoda to the south gate of the Fort.

"If the English fire upon us, their bullets will but turn to water, with a wave of our yellow robe." So spoke the leader to his faithful friends, who had no cause to disbelieve what they were told. Did not each of them carry a charmed life? Would not Mandalay rejoice at their success, and Rangoon too? Many in both cities knew of their march to the Fort that fatal evening.

Through the south gate they came, in proud assurance of victory. There were two figures in the pathway, and suddenly, with a cry of exaltation—"These are our enemies; come, let us kill them," the monk and his followers made a dash onwards. There were screams and cries of fear and pain in the night air. A soldier, wounded and bleeding, fled towards the nearest bungalow. The officer who lived there was happily one of the best shots in Burma. The words had reached him, "The Burmans are upon us! We are being murdered!"

Turning round, he said hastily to his wife, "Go upstairs and lock your door." But for once that brave woman did not obey. How could she leave her husband in such danger, when she knew how to load a pistol as well as he did, and how to use it too? She must stay and help him.

The Burmans were trying now to get over the fence in two directions, and it was no easy matter for the major to keep them at bay.

"I can't help," the soldier had exclaimed, faint with loss of blood, "they've cut off my hand;" and so they had, poor fellow. In a few minutes four of the assailants had been shot, no waving of the yellow robe had saved them from the well-aimed bullets of the English officer. The firing had now attracted attention,

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and other soldiers quickly appeared. The Fort gates were ordered to be closed, and a search was made for the leader of the party ; he was found hiding himself in a niche in the Fort wall, and, having refused to surrender, was shot upon the spot.

He had intended to march down to the officers' quarters, and kill them whilst dining in the Palace, and then proclaim himself king. A simple programme, no doubt, but one difficult to carry out!

The wounded soldier lingered for a few days in terrible pain, and then death happily released him from further suffering.

The remaining members of that misguided party were tried and then executed within the prison walls.

This attack on the Fort had taken place quite recently, and our children had been much impressed by the bravery of the officer's wife. They begged me to write to her and convey their sense of admiration, and in reply we received a very graphic account from her of what had occurred. The poor English woman, who nearly shared the soldier's fate, was saved by her luxuriant hair, which warded off a terrible stroke from a dhá ; she recovered, and was sent home after a subscription had been raised for her benefit.

Before our return to Rangoon we were told that we ought to ascend Mandalay Hill, and enjoy the extensive view which was to be seen from the summit. The ascent would be somewhat trying, we heard, but we should feel amply rewarded for any fatigue we might undergo.

So one evening we drove to the foot of the hill, and as the sun went down we made the ascent. I feel sure that the scenery which gradually opened out before us, as we rose higher and higher, will never fade from our memory. About half-way up we turned aside on to a natural terrace, and saw, for the first time, the renowned five hundred pagodas, with their white peaks reflecting the glories of the sky.

When the summit was reached we stopped breathless and almost overpowered, so fair was the land

which lay at our feet. The sun was setting like a ball of gold, and the sky was streaked with innumerable shades of softest colours. Far away to the north, in purple haze, lay the Chinese frontier, and, beyond where the eye could reach, beneath the solemn shadows of the Himalaya mountains, stretched the wilderness which separates Burma from Hindustan.

We looked down upon the valley which so often had been the scene of strife and warfare. Emerald green was the vegetation; this is the land of many flowers and spreading trees.

Pagodas and kyoungs innumerable were to be seen, for in years gone by no less than twenty thousand Buddhist monks dwelt in this valley, and they have left their influence behind them. These pagodas and kyoungs speak of the fulfilment of many a life's ambition; for they were erected in the days of the kings by those who did not assume the yellow robe but yet longed to acquire merit.

Less than two miles off, the great water highway of Burma, the Irrawady river, wends its way down from the Himalaya mountains towards the south and Rangoon. The country is rich in minerals and lies within a possible distance of the Celestial Empire. Who can dream of the future prospects of Burma when a connecting link has been established on the other side of those blue mountains? Many are looking forward to the time when the inhabitants of the Golden Land will be within a few days' reach of the Land of the Rising Sun.

In times gone by the English merchants believed that yet undiscovered fields of wealth and commerce lay towards the Chinese frontier, and, with a view to obtaining further information upon this important subject, the *first* Mission, with the sanction of the Government of India, started from Mandalay in 1868. Dr. Anderson took a conspicuous part in the enterprise, which resulted in much being discovered that was hitherto unknown, but there was no immediate commercial result.

will send somebody to meet us. If we go to Pegu now, we never shall, I suppose ; and it is a pity to lose such an opportunity, especially as the arrangement won't add to our expenses. I must do write."

The letter was dispatched to the Executive Committee for that was the position Lucy's father held. The reply arrived just when we were saying good-bye to Geraldine. I am afraid it was rather a disappointment for many miles of land and sea would soon be behind us.

We had heard some interesting details about the Shwé-Madoo Praw, or Pagoda of the Supreme, which is forty feet higher than the Pagoda at Rangoon. But we knew that the position Pegu occupied a very inferior position to a flourishing commercial town on the Rangoon River.

When the British troops evacuated the Peguans, who had greatly appreciated the British Government, were left to the mercy of the Burmans, and a time of great oppression followed.

Pegu on a dark morning, enveloped in a thick mist, did not look at all attractive. And the

Then Lucy's mother appeared, looking very picturesque in her Burmese dress. She received us with true oriental grace ; and presently Lucy and Agnes peeped at us from behind a curtain. Yes, at last everybody was awake, and the little girls came forward and offered to take us a walk.

"Where shall we go?" we asked.

"Oh! to the Pagoda, of course," replied Lucy; "but on the way Mary and Constance hope you will stop and see them; they will be so disappointed if you don't."

Mary and Constance were the daughters of the Advocate. Clever, industrious pupils they were; and we hoped that a brilliant scholastic future was in store for Mary especially. Her father had most generously presented a gold cross to the school, which was competed for by the elder girls, and won by Rhoda White.

I need not say much about the Pagoda. It was magnificent, deserted, and silent. No gaily-dressed Peguans passed from shrine to shrine. Scarcely any phongyees were to be seen; the Pagoda might have been in years gone by a centre of devotion, it certainly was not the day we visited it.

In the afternoon Lucy's mother wanted us to visit the bazaars not far distant; and we passed a very interesting time amongst the different stalls laden with everything necessary for a Peguan or Burman. Our kind hostess chose several gifts for each of us. Mine consisted of a pale-green lungi, with lines of a darker shade; a pretty, soft yellow scarf, with sprays of flowers, suitable for a Burmese lady's attire; a pink silk handkerchief; a pair of amber bracelets; and a pair of green sandals. These curiosities were carefully packed up, and travelled with us to England, where they have been much admired.

At sunset we bid farewell to our friends in Pegu and started for Rangoon. I remember that during the short journey two American ladies, missionaries, were our companions; they had been spending a month of the dry weather in the jungle, amongst the Christian Burmese women. I was much impressed by

their simple earnestness and the evident interest they took in their difficult work.

Thus ended our long-wished-for visit to the Royal City of Mandalay.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### FAREWELL TO THE EAST

**L**ET us bid farewell to-day, Sister, to the beautiful Lakes where we have spent so many happy afternoons." It was Amy who spoke thus a week before our departure for England.

The children had all gone to their homes, and the large house seemed very empty without them. The resident teachers too—such faithful helpers they had been—had sailed for India. Our head Mistress has since then continued her studies at the Ladies' College at Cheltenham, and will obtain, we hope, some well-earned certificates of proficiency before she leaves.

Christine, who has already been mentioned in connection with the terrible midnight visitor, hopes before long also to find herself in England, where she passed her early years. And our Kindergarten Mistress, who endeared herself to our little ones, is, as I write these words, sailing towards Marseilles, and expects to reach London in a few days.

Many of our children also have come to England, and are studying in our High Schools, where they have already obtained honourable positions.

"Shall we have tea in the 'fairy grotto' for the last time?" asked Amy. "I can get everything ready whilst you go on with your letter-writing, and the servants will help me."

"Yes, dear," I replied, "that will be a delightful plan. I shall be ready by four o'clock; it will not do to go out sooner. Will you tell Malee presently to fetch a ticca gharrî, and he had better come with us,

so that we can dismiss the gharri when we get to the Lakes, and Malee can bring back the tea-basket. That will be an economical arrangement."

Amy spoke truly when she said we had spent many happy afternoons at the Lakes. At the end of a week's hard work, tea near the water's edge, or games in the Cantonment Gardens, had been amongst the children's greatest pleasures.

But what recreation did they have during the monsoon? is a question which may be naturally asked. Ah! it was very difficult to keep them bright and happy during the rains, when day after day a walk, or even a drive, was by no means enjoyable.

After much consideration we introduced a rather novel amusement, which certainly proved a success. Our elder girls issued invitations to several "At Homes," which, with some guidance, they managed themselves. The guests invited were the day pupils, and the teachers were always ready with their kind assistance. I have seen the long room, which was used as dining-room and play-room, transformed into quite a bower by means of beautiful palms and ferns sent most generously from one of the large public gardens; and up and down the "bower" the children danced and played to their hearts' content.

Their happiness reached a climax when the Chaplain joined them for a time and watched them at their games. This was a real monsoon enjoyment which came every now and then to break the monotony of the splash! splash! splash!—a most melancholy sound if listened to.

"I think the Lakes look more lovely every time we come!" exclaimed Amy as we reached the "fairy grotto"—a name which we ourselves had given to a secluded spot on the side of one of the green slopes overlooking the water. A variety of beautiful ferns of every shade of green grew tier above tier in this enchanting dell, and the foliage of the well-grown trees met over our heads and formed a natural archway.

Down at our feet sloped the soft verdant sward to the water's edge. Tiny canoes, and small boats with



white sails like doves' wings, glistened in the rays of the sun, which was still far above the horizon. It was a fair and peaceful scene which always seemed to open out fresh charms.

Year after year, under the skilful management of the Secretary to the Municipality, the Royal Lakes had grown more attractive. Each time we visited that favoured locality some improvement was visible. Now a hill-side had been transformed into a shady glade, or new flower-beds had been laid out, or a fernery had sprung up in an unfrequented spot.

The Malees, and there were many of them, would watch us with jealous care as we kindled a fire in preparation for tea, and would extinguish the embers as soon as they could gain courage to approach us.

"The past years seem almost like a dream," said Amy, thoughtful. "The time has passed so quickly, and I have been very, very happy. Do you remember, Sister, our first conversation about going home? our plans seemed then so impossible."

"Oh! yes, indeed I do," I replied; "that was on the Saturday when you and I went to the Cantonment Gardens, and whilst the children played about we rested upon that seat which we still call the 'Naples' seat, facing the Japanese bridge. I am quite content now to go straight to London by sea, and I am sure you are too."

"You and I have formed some very grand projects for Burma," cheerfully remarked Amy, "which of course have not all come to fruition; but it is best to aim high, even if events fall short of our expectations."

"It is indeed good of Mrs. Nodder to come from Shwebo and take charge of our work. I am sure all will go on well, and Mr. Walker will make an excellent financial secretary."

"I think so too. The school has risen in numbers in a very encouraging way," remarked Amy with enthusiasm—she had always been an enthusiastic worker.

"Mrs. Nodder will, I fancy, enjoy the change to *Rangoon*," I remarked. "The Mission House at

Shwebo must be terribly trying to live in, it is only made of bamboo. Imagine a house which shakes considerably when one walks across the rooms! Letter-writing must be done under difficulties, I am sure."

"Poor Mr. Nodder, I am afraid, will be very lonely but a missionary's life in Burma *must* be that," said Amy with much sympathy.

"I have not forgotten that he told me some time ago, in a very amusing way, how he longed for a *top hat* when he was stationed on the Andaman Islands; if he had only possessed one the wild natives would have treated him as if he had been a king!"

"How extraordinary," exclaimed Amy, laughing, "for I have read how the first wearer of a top hat was mobbed in the streets of London, and had to beat a hasty retreat, and seek shelter under a friendly roof."

"I think Mr. and Mrs. Nodder are both very brave," I said warmly, "for they lived for months at Akyab, and only went home when fever had taken such a hold of them that it was doubtful if they would recover."

"We shall miss the children dreadfully at first, I am sure," said Amy.

"Yes, indeed we shall; and it seems so strange to think of dear Maudie at rest, when I had dreamt of such an active life for her," I replied rather sadly, for our loss was still fresh in my mind. "God knows what is best for each of us, and Maudie is safe now from all temptation."

Talking thus we had not noticed how low the sun had sunk until, to our dismay, even before we could reach the open road which would lead us home, it was dark, absolutely dark. Every now and then a carriage passed us, but still the road was very lonely, and I remembered what a Commissioner had told me only a few days before. As we hastened on the darkness became darkness that could almost be felt.

"We shall soon arrive at the place where four roads meet, and a native watchman is always stationed

there ; perhaps he will be able to get a gharri for us," Amy spoke encouragingly.

It was so impossible to discern anything that we came suddenly upon the man, who rose solemnly out of the dense gloom. Did we want a gharri ? he asked in Hindoostani. There were none near at hand, but if we would walk down the road to the right we should find one near the Pagoda. Such was the information given, which did not sound at all reassuring.

"We have never been down there in the dark," so I told Amy as we peered in the direction indicated. "See how the trees meet overhead, and there is deep jungle on the right."

As I was speaking a Madrasee passed us with a long, thick bamboo in his hand. He turned down the road indicated by the watchman. There was no time to lose, we must follow him. Darker and darker grew the way. The Madrasee was only a few feet in front of us, but it was difficult to see him even at that short distance.

"A Chinaman was killed here only a few days ago, and the whole affair is wrapped in mystery," I told Amy as we walked quickly along. "I shall be glad when we get into the open road again."

"I don't think anybody would hurt us," replied Amy. "I should not like my Chinaman to come just now, when we are looking forward so much to the homeward voyage. Our protector in front looks quite a formidable personage, does he not ?"

"I fancy he too will be glad to get from under the shadow of these trees," I replied.

We did not talk after that for a few minutes, for the road had commenced to ascend.

Suddenly on our right there was the sound of some one forcing a way through the thick jungle, there was a gleam in the darkness, and then a great stillness. The man with the bamboo had disappeared. To our great consolation the Pagoda came unexpectedly into view, and we could hear voices not *far in advance* of us.

Even in the darkness the outline of the white grotesque griffins, the custodians of the great and silent Pagoda, could be discerned. Very few Burmans were about, they preferred a clear moonlight night for taking their pleasure.

"I am thankful our walk is over!" exclaimed Amy, as if she had passed through a time of anxiety. "But what *can* have become of our friendly guide? I hope no misfortune has befallen him!"

"Sister wanting gharri?" inquired somebody near at hand; and when I turned to see who had asked the question, the mysterious Madrasee was by my side.

"This is a farewell to the Golden Pagoda as well as to the Lakes," I said to Amy; "we shall not come in this direction again. How well I remember my first visit to Buddha's shrine—many things have happened since then."

"You have had a good many anxieties since you first landed, have you not, Sister?" said Amy with sympathy as we drove home.

"Not one too many, dear, and you have shared them with me," was my reply.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Box-wallah, mem-sahib, box-wallah!"

The voice was quite plaintive, but we were so busy packing that we did not turn to see who had arrived upon the verandah.

"Box-wallah, mem-sahib."

The words were repeated with emphasis, as if the voice meant to attract attention.

"Sister, shall I tell the man to go away?" asked one of our kind friends, who had offered to help us with our preparations.

"Yes, please do, for I really am too busy to speak to him myself."

"Box-wallah, mem-sahib, box-wallah!" This time the voice was a little indignant. Why should he be told to go away? Was not this his last chance for many months of selling to Sister and the burra Missie? He knew as well as other people that they

were going to a country far off, but of course they would come back again ; how soon mattered little to the Bengalee.

By this time, without waiting for any encouragement, the Mahometan had arranged matters in his own way, and had commenced to unpack his goods. He admired his beautiful Indian embroidery immensely, and considered everybody ought to do the same.

"Box-wallah, mem-sahib, box-wallah !" At last I felt obliged to interview the man myself. It was quite useless, of course, for him to turn the verandah into an exhibition of oriental needlework, and I really must tell him to go.

"Going to England soon—not wanting," I said, with a wave of my hand towards the exhibition.

"Take, mem-sahib, take." How pleading the voice was !

"Going to England," I said more firmly, "not wanting."

"Take, mem-sahib, take—paying when coming back," and he pointed with pride to his best embroideries, which he was willing to entrust to my care.

"No money," I said again, "very poor."

"I no money wanting," he replied almost with indignation, as if his feelings had been hurt at the mere idea of a business transaction.

And how did the Bengalee know that we were about to depart ? Why had he arrived at this very inopportune moment when we had so much to do ? Of course he had heard the news in the bazaar ; everybody knows what everybody else is doing by means of the bazaar. And no doubt 'Boy' had held out visions to him of a most lucrative negotiation. Poor box-wallah, I was sorry to disappoint him.

I returned to the packing, which had to be finished by nightfall, and hoped by the time I next visited the verandah that the exhibition of oriental goods would have disappeared. But four years in the tropics had not taught me what a patient Mahometan can do.

For three long hours he lived in the hope that I

would change my mind and make some purchases. It was quite useless to attempt to convince him that waiting would not make matters better. Every now and then during that time his plaintive voice reached me through the open venetians.

"Box-wallah, mem-sahib, box-wallah." 'Boy' at last told him that it would be useless to stay longer, and he departed feeling very depressed, I am sure, at his want of success, but not at all sorry that he had wasted three precious hours of the best time of the day.

And that was our farewell to the Bengalee box-wallahs.

"We will go to the Cathedral this evening for the last time," I said to Amy during a trying afternoon, when many kind friends were coming and going.

"Yes, indeed we must, for the Cathedral seems to be full of interesting recollections," she replied.

"Dear Marjorie was baptized there, and our little friend Walter, and Agnes too."

My happiest hours had been spent within those sacred walls, and many others, besides myself, had there gained courage to face the difficulties and trials of life.

On Holy Innocents' Day two of our friends never failed to be present at the early morning service. God had seen fit to take from them five children—the last little boy had died at Insein. The father, an English merchant, was also a musician; and during his leisure hours—they were few enough—he would gather together large numbers of Burmans and teach them singing. Some of our elder girls attended the classes. The crowning event was a grand concert, which was invariably a success.

This merchant often spoke to me about the overland route to China, and his remarks could not fail to be interesting, for he had delivered a lecture upon the subject whilst in England.

And his wife was so brave in the midst of her bereavement. She stands out in my mind as the type

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of a noble woman, who in the deepest sorrow could yet live on in faith.

I will not linger over the next few hours. Our feelings, on this the eve of our departure, were very varied. We were leaving much behind in Burma that we loved and cared for, but we were looking forward to a happy re-union with those from whom we had been separated for several years.

As we drove off in the early morning there were sounds of distress. Ayah was sobbing bitterly, and would not be comforted. Dear, faithful Ayah !

At sunset our ship dipped her bow into the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal, and we felt indeed that we had said a long farewell to the Golden Land.

THE END

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